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FAIR VIRTUE

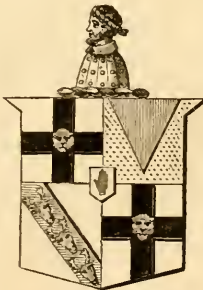
THE

MISTRESS OF PHILARETE.

By GEORGE WITHER, *Gent.*

A NEW EDITION,

REPRINTED FROM THE EDITION OF 1622.



LONDON.

PRINTED BY BENSLEY AND SON,
Bolt Court, Fleet Street,

FOR R. TRIPHOOK, OLD BOND STREET.

1818.

PREFACE.

HAVING already written much about GEORGE WITHER in other places, and perhaps with more diffuseness than a severe critic can approve, I am doubtful whether I ought again to enter upon the same subject. My readers, however, will probably expect a *new* Preface to this Reprint; and I will therefore run the hazard of exposing myself to those who delight in censure. Even the same objects of contemplation appear in different hues to us at different times, according to the moods of the mind, just as the scenery of nature is entirely changed by the varieties of cloud and sunshine.

Perhaps *The Mistress of Philarete* is altogether the most interesting of all WITHER's Poems. It contains the greatest number of his Lyrical Pieces; and especially those which have continued to be favourites through every succeeding generation. Of these, that which begins

Shall I, wasting in despair,
Die because a woman's fair—

and that preceding it, which begins

Hence away, ye Syrens, leave me—

which are both to be found in the present *Poem*, were first appended to the Edition of *Fidelia*, which was printed in 1619. Dr. Percy gave the latter, containing only seven stanzas out of ten, from the Edition of 1620, which WITHER himself calls “an erroneous, imperfect, and counterfeit impression.”

Among all the poems of that day, which have been suffered to fall into oblivion, it is most surprising that of the present Poem no edition should have been called for since 1633, when it appeared in 2 vols. 12mo, incorporated with the rest of WITHER’S *Juvenilia*.

Its sentiments are so natural; its language so pure and perspicuous; and its metre so flowing and musical, that we vainly seek in its intrinsic character a cause for its falling into disuse. We do not want extracts to prove this: such is the whole Poem, from the very beginning to the end. But I will call the reader’s attention to a passage or two, on account of still higher merits. He thus addresses Poetry, with reference to his Mistress:

You enchanting spells, that lie
 Lurking in sweet Poesy:
 (And to none else will appear,
 But to those that worthy are)
 Make her know, there is a power
 Ruling in these charms of your,
 That transcends, a thousand heights,
 Ordinary men’s delights;
 And can leave within her breast
 Pleasures not to be exprest! &c.

The following lines describe one of the numerous features of beauty in his Mistress, on which he dilates with an almost endless command of words :

Those bright eyes, that with their light
 Oftentimes have blest my sight,
 And in turning thence their shining
 Left me in sad darkness pining,
 Are the rarest loveliest grey,
 And do cast forth such a ray,
 As the man, that black prefers,
 More would like this grey of hers.
 When their matchless beams she shrowds,
 'Tis like Cinthia hid in clouds.
 If again she shew them light,
 'Tis like dawning after night, &c.

Again, of her mental powers—

Raised by her discourse I fly
 In contented thoughts so high,
 That I pass the common measures
 Of the dulled senses' pleasures ;
 And leave far below my flight
 Vulgar pitches of delight.

If she smile, and merry be,
 All about her are as she ;
 For each looker-on takes part
 Of the joy that's in her heart.

If she grieve, or you but spy
 Sadness peeping through her eye,
 Such a grace it seems to borrow,
 That you'll fall in love with Sorrow ;
 And abhor the scene of mirth
 As the hateful'st thing on earth.

I will only cite one more passage on this subject.

She's no image, trimm'd about,
 Fair within, and foul without;
 But a gem, that doth appear
 Like the diamond, every where
 Sparkling rays of beauty forth,
 All of such unblemish'd worth,
 That, wer't possible, your eye
 Might her inmost thoughts espy,
 And behold the dimmest part
 Of the lustre in her heart,
 It would find that centre pass
 What the superficies was:
 And that every angle there
 Like a diamond's inside were.—

WITHER early appreciated the character of his own poetry with sufficient correctness. He said in his Address to the Reader before his *Abuses Stript and Whipt*, “ Do not look for SPENSER'S or DANIEL'S well-composed numbers; or the deep conceits of now flourishing JONSON.”—“ Some, no doubt, will mistake my *plainness* in that I have so bluntly spoken what I have observed, without any *poetical* additions, or *feigned Allegories*. I am sorry I have not pleased them therein; but should have been more sorry if I had displeased myself in doing otherwise: for, if I had wrapped up my meaning in dark riddles, I should have been more applauded, and less understood, which I nothing desire.”—“ Readers,” he goes on, “ though you understand them not, yet because you see this wants some fine phrases, and

such flourishes as you find other men's writings stuff withal, perhaps you will judge me unlearned"—
 “And if that be a fault (did not the subject and your ignorances require me to be in that sort faulty) I would with ease have amended it; for it cost me, I protest, more labour to observe this *plainness*, than if I had more *poetically* trimmed it.”—

That this *plainness* of language, though it arose from certain intellectual qualities and habits which unquestionably had a tendency to depress WITHER'S poetical compositions into the flatness of prose, was at times consistent with the spirit of true poetry, *the Mistress of Philarete* will satisfactorily prove. It is true that WITHER was deficient in those original and uncommon excursions of fancy, which if they sometimes produce harsh combinations and false splendor, now and then brighten or elevate the mind by their beauty or their magnificence: but in his happier moments, when he felt the inspiration of the Muse, there was such a gentle and unclouded sunshine in the pictures which presented themselves to him, he sketched the smiling scenery of a common landscape with so free and light a hand, and in such transparent colours, as to justify his claims to the praise of real genius.

The Stationer's Preface to this work, informs us that “it was one of the Author's first Poems.” He thus speaks of it in his First *Satire—on Love*—in his *Abuses Stript and Whipt*, first published 1611, æt. 21.

But how now? was't not you, says one, that late
 So humbly beg'd a boon at Beauty's gate;

Was it not you, that to a Female Saint
 Indited your *Philarete's* complaint
 With many doleful Sonnets? Was't not you?
 Sure 'twas, says he. But then, how comes it now
 You carp at love thus in a Satyr's vein?
 Take heed, you fall not into her hands again.
 Sure if you do, you shall in open court
 Be forc'd to sing a palinodia for 't.
 What! are your brains dry? or your blood grown cold?
 Or are you on a sudden waxen old,
 To flout at love, which men of greatest wit
 Allow in youth as natural and fit?
 What reason have you for 't else? What pretence
 Have you to make excuse for this offence?

To him I answer, that indeed e'en I
 Was lately subject to this malady:
 Liked what I now dislike; employ'd good times
 In the composing of such idle rhymes
 As are objected: from my heart I sent
 Full many a heavy sigh, and sometimes spent
 Unmanly tears. I thought, I must confess,
 If she I loved had smiled, no happiness
 Might equalize it, and her frown much worse,
 O God forgive me, than the Church's curse.

I did, as some do, not much matter make
 To hazard soul and body for her sake.
 Having no hope, sometime I did despair,
 Sometime too much built castles in the air.
 In many a foolish humour I have been
 As well as others. Look where I have seen
 Her, whom I lov'd, to walk, when she was gone,
 Thither I often have repair'd alone,
 As if I thought the places did contain
 Some poor contentment—O exceeding vain!

Yet, what if I have been thus idly bent,
 Shall I be now ashamed to repent?
 Moreover I was in my childhood then,
 And am scarce yet reputed for a man.
 And therefore neither cold, nor old, nor dry,
 Nor cloy'd with any foul disease am I;
 Whereby the strength of Nature is declined;
 'Tis no such cause that made me change my mind:
 But my affection, that before was blind,
 Rash, and unruly, now begins to find
 That it had run a large and fruitless race,
 And thereupon hath given Reason place.
 So that by Reason, what no Reason might
 Persuade me from before, I leave outright,
 Justly forsaken; for because I see
 'Twas vain, absurd, and nought but foolery.
 Yet for all this, look where I loved of late,
 I have not turn'd it in a spleen to hate.
 No: for 'twas first her virtue and her wit
 Taught me to see how much I wanted it.
 Then, as for love, I do allow it still:
 I never did dislike 't, nor never will,
 So it be virtuous, and contain'd within
 The bounds of reason: but when 'twill begin
 And run at random, and her limits break,
 I must, because I cannot choose but speak.

In our Author's *Satire to the King*, intended as
 an Apology for the *Abuses Stript and Whipt*, for
 which he was imprisoned in the Marshalsea, the
 Poet, imploring liberty, says

And yet I ask it not, for that I fear
 The outward means of life should fail me here;

For though I want to compass those good ends,
 I aim at for my country and my friends,
 In this poor state, I can as well content me,
 As if that I had wealth and honours lent me;
 Nor for my own sake do I seek to shun
 This thraldom, wherein now I seem undone:
 For though I prize my freedom more than gold,
 And use the means to free myself from hold,
 Yet with a mind I hope unchang'd and free,
 Here can I live, and play with misery.
 Yea, in despite of want and slavery,
 Laugh at the world in all her bravery.
 Here have I learn'd to make my greatest wrongs
 Matter of mirth, and subjects but for songs.
 Here can I smile to see myself neglected,
 And how the mean man's suit is disrespected;
 Whilst those, that are more rich and better friended,
 Can have twice greater faults thrice sooner mended.
 All this, yea more, I see, and suffer too;
 Yet live content 'midst discontents I do;
 Which whilst I can, it is all one to me,
 Whether in prison, or abroad it be.
 For should I still lie here distress and poor,
 It shall not make me breathe a sigh the more;
 Since to myself it is indifferent,
 Where the small remnant of my days be spent;
 But for thy sake, my Country's, and my Friends',
 For whom more than myself God this life lends,
 I would not, could I help it, be a scorn,
 But live, if I might, free as I was born:
 Or rather for good *Bell-arete's* sake.
 FAIR VIRTUE, of whom most account I make,
 If I can choose, I will not be debased,
 In this last action, lest SHE be disgraced.

For 'twas the love of her, that brought me to
 What Spleen nor Envy could not make me do :
 And if her servants be no more regarded,
 If enemies of Vice be thus rewarded,
 And I should also *Virtue's* wrongs conceal,
 As if none lived to whom she dared appeal,
 Will they, that do not yet their worth approve,
 Be ever drawn to entertain her love,
 When they shall see him plagued as an offender,
 Who for the love he bears her, dares commend her ?

In his best pieces WITHER'S most prominent fault is his excessive diffuseness : in his worst, this falls into the most flat and dull common-place. It has rendered his Satires, and all his latter verses, which till his death he poured forth in such abundance, unconquerably languid and tedious. But in all of them there are passages about himself, passages of complaint, or indignation, or kindly affections, which are highly interesting and eloquent. The diction of them is strikingly transparent, elegant, and harmonious ; and has so little of an antique cast, that neither in idiom nor in accentuation does it vary from the language of the present day.

Our Author concludes his Poem, entitled his MOTTÖ—*Nec habeo nec careo, nec curo*, with the following lines :

My mind's my kingdom ; and I will permit
 No others' will to have the rule of it.

For I am free; and no man's power, I know,
 Did make me thus; nor shall unmake me now.
 But through a spirit none can quench in me,
 This mind I got; and this my mind shall be.

GEORGE WITHER was born at Bentworth in Hampshire, 1590, and died 1667, æt. 78. From his numerous hasty productions an ample and most curious account of the opinions and sentiments of a busy, versatile, fervid, and ingenious mind, from youth to age, at an æra of great events, might be drawn by a man of industry and talent.*

Hereafter I may have occasion to say more on this subject, than the present little volume will conveniently admit.

GROSVENOR SQUARE,
 Nov. 19, 1817.

S. E. BRYDGES.

* See a Memoir of him by the PRESENT EDITOR in the first Volume of *The British Bibliographer*—and a List of his numerous Publications in the same Work by MR. PARK.

FAIR VIRTUE,
THE
MISTRESS OF PHILARETE.

WRITTEN BY

GEORGE WITHER, GENT.

. Nihil veremur
Istos, qui in platea, modo huc, modo illuc
In re prætereunt sua occupati.

Catul. Carm. xv.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR JOHN GRISMAND,

1622.

THE STATIONER

TO THE READER.

THIS being one of the Author's first Poems, was composed many years ago; and unknown to him, gotten out of his custody by an acquaintance of his. And coming lately to my hands without a name, it was thought to have so much resemblance of the Maker, that many, upon the first sight, undertook to guess who was Author of it: And, persuaded that it was likely also to become profitable both to them, and me.

Whereupon, I got it authorized, according to order; intending to publish it, without further inquiry. But, attaining by chance a more perfect knowledge to whom it most properly belonged, I thought it fitting to acquaint him therewithal. And did so; desiring also, both his good will to publish the same, and leave to pass it under his name. Both which I found him very unwilling to permit; lest the seeming lightness of such a subject might somewhat disparage the more serious studies which he hath since undertaken.

Yet, doubting, this being got out of his custody, some imperfecter copies might hereafter be scattered abroad in writing, or unknown to him, imprinted; he was pleased, upon my importunities, to condescend that it might be published without his name: and his words were these:

“When, (said he), I first composed it, I well liked thereof; and it well enough became my years: but now, I neither like, nor dislike it. That, therefore, it should be divulged, I desire not; and whether it be, or whether (if it happen so) it be approved or no, *I care not*. For this I am sure of: howsoever it be valued, it is worth as much as I prize it at: likely it is also to be as beneficial to the world, as the world hath been to me, and will be more than those, who like it not, ever deserved at my hands.”

These were his speeches; and, if you looked for a Prologue, thus much he wished me to tell you instead thereof; because, as he said, he himself had somewhat else to do. Yet, to acknowledge the truth, I was so earnest with him, that as busy as he would seem to be, I got him to write this Epistle for me: and have thereunto set my name; which, he wished me to confess; partly to avoid the occasion of belying my invention, and partly because he thought some of you would suppose so much.

I entreated him to explain his meaning, in certain

obscure passages: but he told me, how that were to take away the employment of his *Interpreters*: whereas he would purposely leave somewhat remaining doubtful, to see what *Sir Politick Would-be*, and his companions, could pick out of it.

I desired him also to set down, to what good purposes this Poem would serve: but his reply was, How that would be well enough found out in the perusing, by all such as had honest understandings: and they who are not so provided, he hopes will not read it. More, I could not get from him.

Whether therefore, this *Mistress of Phil'arete* be really a Woman, shadowed under the name of VIRTUE; or VIRTUE only, whose loveliness is represented by the beauty of an excellent woman; or, whether it mean both together, I cannot tell you. But, thus much I dare promise for your money, that here you shall find familiarly expressed, both such beauties as young men are most intangled withal, and the excellency also of such as are most worthy their affection: that seeing both impartially set forth, by him that was capable of both, they might the better settle their love on the best.

Hereby also, those women, who desire to be truly beloved, may know what makes them so to be; and seek to acquire those accomplishments of the *mind*, which may endear them, when the sweetest features

of a beautiful face shall be converted into deformities. And here is described that loveliness of theirs, which is the principal object of wanton affection, to no worse end: but that those who would never have looked on this Poem, if virtue and goodness had been therein no otherwise represented than as they are objects of the soul, might, where they expected the satisfaction of their sensuality only, meet with that also, which would insinuate into them an apprehension of more reasonable and most excellent perfections. Yea, whereas the common opinion of youth hath been, that only old men, and such as are unable, or past delighting in a bodily loveliness, are those who are best capable of the *mind's* perfections: and, that they do therefore so much prefer them before the other; because their age, or stupidity, hath deprived them of being sensible what pleasures they yield. Though this be the vulgar error; yet here it shall appear, that He, who was able to conceive the most excellent pleasingness, which could be apprehended in a *corporal beauty*, found it, even when he was most enamoured with it, far short of that inexpressible sweetness, which he discovered in a *virtuous and well-tempered disposition*. And if this be not worth your money, keep it.

JOHN MARRIOT,

PHILARETE TO HIS MISTRESS.



HAIL, thou fairest of all creatures,
Upon whom the Sun doth shine ;
Model of all rarest features,
And perfections most divine ;
Thrice all hail ; and blessed be
Those that love, and honour thee !

Of thy worth this rural story
Thy unworthy swain hath pen'd ;
And to thy ne'er ending glory
These plain numbers doth commend ;
Which ensuing Times shall warble,
When 'tis lost, that's writ in marble.

Though thy praise, and high deservings
Cannot all be here exprest ;
Yet my love, and true observings,
Some way ought to be profest.
And, where greatest love we see,
Highest things attempted be.

By thy beauty, I have gained
To behold the best perfections ;
By thy love, I have obtained
To enjoy the best affections.
And my tongue, to sing thy praise,
Love and Beauty thus doth raise.

What, although in rustic shadows,
 I a shepherd's breeding had?
 And, confined to these meadows,
 So in home-spun russet clad?
 Such as I, have now and then
 Dar'd as much as greater men.

Though a stranger to the Muses,
 Young, obscured, and despis'd;
 Yet such art thy love infuses,
 That I thus have poetiz'd.
 Read, and be content to see
 Thy admired power in me.

And, O grant, thou sweetest Beauty,
 Wherewith ever earth was grac'd,
 That this trophy of my duty
 May with favour be embrac'd:
 And disdain not in these rhymes
 To be sung to after-times.

Let those doaters on Apollo,
 That adore the Muses so,
 And, like geese, each other follow,
 See, what Love alone can do.
 For in love-lays, grove, and field,
 Nor to schools, nor courts will yield.

On this glass of thy perfection,
 If that any women pry;
 Let them thereby take direction,
 To adorn themselves thereby:
 And if aught amiss they view,
 Let them dress themselves anew.

Young men shall, by this, acquainted
 With the truest Beauties grow ;
 So the counterfeit, or painted,
 They may shun, when them they know,
 But the way all will not find ;
 For some, eyes liave, yet are blind.

Thee entirely I have loved ;
 So thy sweetness on me wrought ;
 Yet thy Beauty never moved
 Ill temptations in my thought.
 But still did thy Beauty's ray,
 Sun-like, drive those fogs away.

Those, that Mistresses are named,
 And for that suspected be,
 Shall not need to be ashamed,
 If they pattern take by thee.
 Neither shall their servants fear,
 Favours openly to wear.

Thou to no man favour deignest,
 But what's fitting to bestow ;
 Neither servants entertainest,
 That can ever wanton grow :
 For the more they look on thee,
 Their desires still better'd be.

This thy picture therefore shew I
 Naked unto every eye :
 Yet no fear of rival know I,
 Neither touch of jealousy.
 For the more make love to thee,
 I the more shall pleased be.

I am no Italian lover,
 That will mew thee in a jail ;
 But thy beauty I discover,
 English-like, without a veil :
 If thou may'st be won away,
 Win and wear thee, he that may.

Yet in this thou may'st believe me,
 So indifferent though I seem,
 Death with tortures would not grieve me,
 More, than loss of thy esteem.
 For if Virtue me forsake,
 All a scorn of me will make.

Then, as I on thee relying,
 Do no changing fear in thee ;
 So, by my defects supplying,
 From all changing keep thou me.
 That unmatched we may prove,
 Thou for beauty, I for love.

Then, when their loves are forgotten,
 Who to pride and lust were slaves ;
 And their Mistresses quite rotten,
 Lie unthought on, in their graves,
 Kings and Queens, in their despite,
 Shall to mind us take delight.

FAIR VIRTUE;

OR,

THE MISTRESS OF PHIL'ARETE.



TWO pretty rills do meet, and meeting make
Within one valley, a large silver lake :
About whose banks the fertile mountains stood.
In ages passed bravely crown'd with wood ;
Which lending cold sweet shadows, gave it grace,
To be accounted Cynthia's bathing place.
And from her father Neptune's brackish court,
Fair Thetis thither often would resort,
Attended by the fishes of the Sea,
Which in those sweeter waters came to play.
There, would the daughter of the Sea-god dive ;
And thither came the Land-nymphs every eve,
To wait upon her : bringing for her brows,
Rich garlands of sweet flowers, and beechy boughs.

For, pleasant was that Pool ; and near it, then,
Was neither rotten marsh, nor boggy fen.
It was not overgrown with boist'rous sedge,
Nor grew there rudely then along the edge
A bending willow, nor a prickly bush,
Nor broad-leaf'd flag, nor reed, nor knotty rush.

But here, well order'd was a grove with bowers,
 There grassy plots set round about with flowers.
 Here, you might, through the water, see the land,
 Appear, strew'd o'er with white or yellow sand.
 Yon, deeper was it ; and the wind by whiffs,
 Would make it rise, and wash the little cliffs,
 On which, oft pluming sat, unfrighted then,
 The gagling wildgoose, and the snow-white swan ;
 With all those flocks of fowls, which to this day,
 Upon those quiet waters, breed and play.

For, though those excellences wanting be,
 Which once it had ; it is the same that we
 By transposition name the Ford of Arle,
 And out of which, along a chalky marl,
 That river trills, whose waters wash the fort,
 In which brave Arthur kept his royal court.
 North-east, not far from this great pool, there lies
 A tract of beechy mountains, that arise
 With leisurely ascending to such height,
 As from their tops the warlike Isle of Wight
 You in the ocean's bosom may espie,
 Though near two hundred furlongs thence it lie.
 The pleasant way, as up those hills you clime,
 Is strewed o'er with marjarom and thyme,
 Which grows unset. The hedge-rows do not want
 The cowslip, violet, primrose, nor a plant
 That freshly scents : as birch both green and tall,
 Low sallows, on whose bloomings bees do fall.
 Fair woodbinds, which about the hedges twine,
 Smooth privet, and the sharp-sweet eglantine.
 With many mo, whose leaves and blossoms fair
 The earth adorn, and oft perfume the air.

When you unto the highest do attain,
 An intermixture both of wood and plain

You shall behold ; which, though aloft it lye,
 Hath downs for sheep, and fields for husbandry.
 So much, at least, as little needeth more,
 If not enough to merchandize their store.

In every row hath Nature planted there
 Some banquet for the hungry passenger.
 For here the hazel-nut and filbert grows ;
 There bullace, and a little further sloes ;
 On this hand standeth a fair wielding tree ;
 On that, large thickets of black cherries be !
 The shrubby fields, are raspice orchards there ;
 The new fell'd woods, like strawberry gardens are ;
 And, had the King of Rivers blest those hills
 With some small number of such pretty rills,
 As flow elsewhere, Arcadia had not seen
 A sweeter plot of earth than this had been.

For what offence this place was scanted so
 Of springing waters, no record doth show ;
 Nor have they old tradition left, that tells ;
 But, till this day, at fifty fathom wells
 The shepherds drink : and strange it was to hear
 Of any swain that ever lived there,
 Who either in a Pastoral Ode had skill,
 Or knew to set his fingers to a quill.
 For, rude they were who there inhabited,
 And to a dull contentment being bred,
 They no such art esteem'd, nor took much heed
 Of any thing, the world without them did.

E'en there, and in the least frequented place
 Of all these mountains, is a little space
 Of pleasant ground hemm'd in with dropping trees,
 And those so thick that Phœbus scarcely sees
 The earth they grow on once in all the year,
 Nor what is done among the shadows there.

Along those lovely paths, where never came
 Report of Pan, or of Apollo's name,
 Nor rumour of the Muses, till of late
 Some nymphs were wand'ring : and by chance or fate
 Upon a lawn arrived, where they met
 The little flock of pastor *Philaret*.

They were a troop of Beauties known well nigh
 Through all the plains of happy Britainy.
 A shepherd's lad was he, obscure and young,
 Who, being first that ever there had sung,
 In homely verse expressed country loves,
 And only told them to the beechy groves ;
 As if to sound his name he never meant,
 Beyond the compass that his sheep-walk went.

They saw not him, nor them perceived he ;
 For in the branches of a maple tree
 He shrouded sat, and taught the hollow hill
 To echo forth the music of his quill :
 Whose tatling voice redoubled so the sound,
 That where he was conceal'd they quickly found :
 And there they heard him sing a madrigal,
 That soon betray'd his cunning to them all.

Full rude it was no doubt, but such a song,
 Those rustic and obscured shades among,
 Was never heard, they say, by any ear,
 Until his Muses had inspir'd him there.
 Though mean and plain his country habit seem'd,
 Yet by his song the ladies rightly deem'd
 That either he had travelled abroad,
 Where swains of better knowledge make abode,
 Or else that some brave nymph, who us'd that grove,
 Had deigned to enrich him with her love.

Approaching nearer therefore to this swain,
 They him saluted, and he them again,

In such good fashion, as well seem'd to be
 According to their state and his degree.
 Which greetings being passed, and much chat
 Concerning him, the place, with this and that,
 He to an arbour doth those Beauties bring,
 Where he them prays to sit, they him to sing ;
 And to express that untaught country art
 In setting forth the Mistress of his heart ;
 Which they o'erheard him practise, when, unseen,
 He thought no ear had witness of it been.

At first, as much unable, he refus'd,
 And seem'd willing to have been excus'd
 From such a task : for, trust me, Nymphs, quoth he,
 I would not purposely uncivil be,
 Nor churlish in denying what you crave ;
 But, as I hope great Pan my flock will save,
 I rather wish that I might, heard of none,
 Enjoy my music by myself alone ;
 Or that the murmurs of some little flood,
 Join'd with the friendly echoes of the wood,
 Might be th' impartial umpires of my wit,
 Than vent it, where the world might hear of it.
 And doubtless I had sung less loud while ere
 Had I but thought of any such so near.

Not that I either wish obscurified
 Her matchless beauty, or desire to hide
 Her sweet perfections : for, by Love I swear,
 The utmost happiness I aim at here
 Is but to compass worth enough to raise
 A high-built trophy equal with her praise.

Which, fairest Ladies, I shall hope in vain ;
 For I was meanly bred on yonder plain :
 And, though I can well prove my blood to be
 Deriv'd from no ignoble stems to me,

Yet Fate and Time them so obscur'd and crost,
 That with their fortunes their esteem is lost.
 And whatso'er repute I strive to win,
 Now from myself alone it must begin:
 For I have nor estate, nor friends, nor fame,
 To purchase either credit to my name,
 Or gain a good opinion; though I do
 Ascend the height I shall aspire unto.

If any of those virtues yet I have,
 Which honour to my predecessors gave,
 There's all that's left me. And though some contemn
 Such needy jewels, yet it was for them
 My Fair-one did my humble suit affect,
 And deigned my adventurous love respect.
 And by their help I passage hope to make
 Through such poor things as I dare undertake.

But, you may say, what goodly thing, alas!
 Can my despised meanness bring to pass?
 Or what great monument of honour raise
 To Virtue, in these vice-abounding days?
 In which a thousand times more honour finds
 Ignoble gotten means, than noble minds?
 Indeed, the world affordeth small reward
 For honest minds; and therefore her regard
 I seek not after: neither do I care
 If I have bliss, how others think I fare:
 For, so my thoughts have rest, it irks not me,
 Though none but I do know how blest they be.
 Here, therefore, in these groves and hidden plains
 I pleased sit alone, and many strains
 I carol to myself these hills among,
 Where no man comes to interrupt my song.
 Whereas, if my rude lays make known I should,
 Beyond their home, perhaps some carpers would,

Because they have not heard from whence they be,
 Traduce, abuse, and scoff both them and me.
 For, if our great and learned shepherds, who
 Are grac'd with wit, and fame, and favours too,
 With much ado, escape uncensur'd may,
 What hopes have I to pass unscoff'd, I pray,
 Who yet unto the Muses am unknown,
 And live unhonour'd here among mine own?

A gadding humour seldom taketh me,
 To range out farther, than yon mountains be,
 Nor hath applausive rumour borne my name
 Upon the spreading wings of sounding Fame :
 Nor can I think, fair Nymphs, that you resort
 For other purpose, than to make a sport
 At that simplicity, which shall appear
 Among the rude untutor'd shepherds here.

I know that you my noble Mistress ween
 At best, a homely milk-maid on the green ;
 Or some such country lass, as tasked stays
 At servile labour until holy days.
 For poor men's virtues so neglected grow,
 And are now prized at a rate so low,
 As 'tis impossible, *You* should be brought
 To let it with belief possess your thought,
 That any nymph, whose love might worthy be,
 Would deign to cast respective eyes on me.

You see I live, possessing none of those
 Gay things, with which the world enamour'd grows.
 To woo a courtly Beauty, I have neither
 Rings, bracelets, jewels, nor a scarf, nor feather :
 I use no double-dyed cloth to wear,
 No scrip embroider'd richly do I bear ;

No silken belt, nor sheephook laid with pearls,
 To win me favour from the shepherds' girls
 No place of office or command I keep,
 But this my little flock of homely sheep :
 And, in a word, the sum of all my pelf
 Is this—*I am the master of myself.*

No doubt, in courts of princes you have been,
 And all the pleasures of the palace seen :
 There you beheld brave courtly passages,
 Between Heroës and their Mistresses :
 You there perhaps, in presence of the king,
 Have heard his learned Bards and Poets sing.
 And what contentment, then, can wood or field,
 To please your curious understandings, yield ?
 I know you walked hither but to prove
 What silly shepherds do conceive of love ;
 Or to make trial, how our simpleness
 Can passions force or Beauty's power express ;
 And when you are departed, you will joy
 To laugh, or descant on the shepherd's boy.

But yet, I vow, if all the art I had,
 Could any more esteem or glory add
 To her unmatched worth, I would not weigh
 What you intended. Prithee, lad, quoth they,
 Distrustful of our courtsey do not seem.
 Her nobleness can never want esteem,
 Nor thy concealed measures be disgrac'd,
 Though in a meaner person they were plac'd :
 If thy too modestly reserved quill
 But reach that height which we suppose it will.

Thy meanness or obscureness cannot wrong
 The Nymph thou shalt eternize in thy song :

For, as it higher rears thy glory, that
 A noble Mistress thou hast aimed at ;
 So, more unto her honour it will prove,
 That whilst deceiving shadows others move
 Her constant eyes could pass unmoved by
 The subtil time's bewitching bravery,
 And those obscured virtues love in thee
 That with despised meanness clouded be.
 Now then, for her sweet sake, whose beauteous eye
 Hath fill'd thy soul with heavenly poesy,
 Sing in her praise some new inspired strain ;
 And, if within our power there shall remain
 A favour to be done may pleasure thee,
 Ask, and obtain it, whatsoe'er it be.

Fair Ladies, quoth the lad, such words as those
 Compel me can : and, therewithal, he rose,
 Return'd them thanks, obeisance made, and then
 Down sate again, and thus to sing began,



You, that at a blush can tell
 Where the best perfections dwell,
 And the substance can conjecture,
 By a shadow or a picture ;
 Come, and try, if you by this,
 Know my Mistress, who she is.

For, though I am far unable
 Here to match Apelles' table,
 Or draw Zeuxis' cunning lines,
 Who so painted Bacchus' vines,
 That the hungry birds did muster
 Round the counterfeited cluster :
 Though I vaunt not to inherit
 Petrarch's yet unequall'd spirit,
 Nor to quaff the sacred well
 Half so deep as Astrophel :
 Though the much commended Celia,
 Lovely Laura, Stella, Delia,
 Who in former times excell'd,
 Live in lines unparallel'd,
 Making us believe, 'twere much,
 Earth should yield another such.

Yet, assisted but by nature,
 I essay to paint a creature,
 Whose rare worth, in future years,
 Shall be prais'd as much as theirs :
 Nor let any think amiss,
 That I have presumed this ;
 For a gentle Nymph is she,
 And hath often honour'd me.
 She's a noble spark of light,
 In each part so exquisite,

Had she in times passed been,
They had made her Beauty's Queen.

Then, shall cowardly despair
Let the most unblemish'd Fair,
For default of some poor art,
Which her favour may impart,
And the sweetest Beauty fade,
That was ever born or made?
Shall, of all the Fair ones, she
Only so unhappy be,
As to live in such a time,
In so rude, so dull a clime,
Where no spirit can ascend
High enough, to apprehend
Her unprized excellence,
Which lies hid from common sense?
Never shall a stain so vile
Blemish this our Poet's Isle:
I myself will rather run,
And seek out for Helicon.
I will wash, and make me clean
In the waves of Hippocrene;
And, in spite of Fortune's bars,
Climb the Hill that braves the stars:
Where, if I can get no Muse
That will any skill infuse,
Or my just attempt prefer,
I will make a Muse of Her;
Whose kind heat shall soon distil
Art into my ruder quill.
By her favour, I will gain
Help to reach so rare a strain,
That the learned hills shall wonder,
How the untaught vallies under,

Met with raptures so divine,
Without knowledge of the Nine.

I, that am a Shepherd's Swain,
Piping on the lowly plain,
And no other music can
Than what learn'd I have of Pan :
I, who never sung the lays,
That deserve Apollo's bays,
Hope not only here to frame
Measures, which shall keep Her name
From the spite of wasting times,
But, enshrin'd in sacred rhimes,
Place her where her form divine
Shall to after ages shine ;
And without respect of odds,
Vie renown with demi-gods.

Then, whilst of her praise I sing,
Hearken, Valley, Grove, and Spring ;
Listen to me, sacred Fountains,
Solitary Rocks and Mountains :
Satyrs, and you wanton Elves,
That do nightly sport yourselves :
Shepherds, you that on the reed
Whistle, while your lambs do feed :
Aged Woods and Floods that know
What hath been long times ago :
Your more serious notes among
Hear how I can, in my song,
Set a Nymph's perfection forth ;
And, when you have heard her worth,
Say, if such another lass
Ever known to mortal was.

Listen, Lordlings, you that most
Of your outward honours boast ;

And, you Gallants, that think scorn
 We to lowly fortunes born
 Should attain to any graces,
 Where you look for sweet embraces!

See, if all those vanities
 Whereon your affection lies ;
 Or the titles, or the power,
 By your fathers' virtues your,
 Can your Mistresses enshrine
 In such state as I will mine,
 Who am forced to importune
 Favours, in despite of Fortune.

Beauties, listen; chiefly you
 That yet know not Virtue's due.
 You, that think there are no sports,
 Nor no honours but in courts :
 Though of thousands there lives not
 Two, but die and are forgot :
 See, if any palace yields
 Aught more glorious than the fields.
 And consider well, if we
 May not as high-flying be
 In our thoughts, as you that sing
 In the chambers of a king.
 See, if our contented minds,
 Whom Ambition never blinds ;
 We, that clad in home-spun grey,
 On our own sweet meadows play,
 Cannot honour, if we please,
 Where we list, as well as these.
 Or as well of worth approve,
 Or with equal passions love.
 See, if beauties may not touch
 Our soon-loving hearts as much ;

Or our services effect
 Favours, with as true respect,
 In your good conceits to rise,
 As our painted butterflies.

And, you Fairest, give her room,
 When your sex's pride doth come :
 For that subject of my song
 I invoke these groves among,
 To be witness of the lays,
 Which I carol in her praise.
 And, because she soon will see,
 If my measures faulty be,
 Whilst I chant them, let each rhyme
 Keep a well proportion'd time ;
 And with strains that are divine,
 Meet her thoughts in every line.
 Let each accent there, present
 To her soul a new content ;
 And, with ravishings so seize her,
 She may feel the height of pleasure.

You enchanting spells, that lie
 Lurking in sweet Poesy,
 And to none else will appear,
 But to those that worthy are,
 Make her know, there is a power
 Ruling in these charms of your,
 That transcends, a thousand heights,
 Ordinary men's delights,
 And can leave within her breast
 Pleasures not to be exprest.
 Let her linger, on each strain,
 As if she would hear't again,
 And were loth to part from thence,
 Till she had the quintessence

Out of each conceit she meets,
And had stor'd her with those sweets.

Make her, by your art, to see,
I, that am her swain, was he
Unto whom all beauties here
Were alike, and equal dear :
That I could of freedom boast,
And of favours with the most :
Yet now, nothing more affecting,
Sing of Her, the rest neglecting.

Make her heart, with full compassion,
Judge the merit of true passion ;
And as much my love prefer
As I strive to honour her.

Lastly, you that will, I know,
Hear me, whether you should or no ;
You, that seek to turn all flowers
By your breath's infectious powers,
Into such rank loathsome weeds
As your dunghill nature breeds ;
Let your hearts be chaste, or here
Come not, till you purge them clear.
Mark, and mark then, what is worst ;
For whate'er it seems at first,
If you bring a modest mind,
You shall nought immodest find.

But, if any too severe,
Hap to lend a partial ear,
Or, out of his blindness, yawn
Such a word as—*Oh profane !*
Let him know thus much from me,
If here's aught profane, 'tis he,
Who applies these excellences
Only to the touch of senses ;

And, dim-sighted, cannot see
Where the soul of this may be.

Yet, that no offence may grow,
'Tis their choice to stay or go.
Or, if any for despite
Rather comes, than for delight,
For his presence I'll not pray,
Nor his absence ; come he may.
Critics shall admitted be,
Though I know they'll carp at me :
For I neither fear nor care,
What in this their censures are.

If the verse, here used, be
Their dislike, it liketh me.
If my method they deride,
Let them know—Love is not tied
In his free discourse to chuse
Such strict rules as arts-men use.
These may prate of Love ; but they
Know him not : for he will play
From the matter now and then,
Off and on, and off again.

If this prologue tedious seem,
Or the rest too long they deen,
Let them know, my love they win,
Though they go ere I begin,
Just as if they should attend me
Till the last, and there commend me.
For I will, for no man's pleasure,
Change a syllable or measure ;
Neither, for their praises, add
Aught to mend what they think bad ;
Since it never was my fashion
To make work of recreation.

Pedants shall not tie my strains
 To our antique poets' veins ;
 As if we in latter days
 Knew to love, but not to praise ;
 Being born as free as these,
 I will sing as I shall please ;
 Who, as well new paths may run,
 As the best before have done.
 I disdain to make my song
 For their pleasures short or long :
 If I please I'll end it here,
 If I list I'll sing this year.
 And, though none regard of it,
 By myself I pleas'd can sit,
 And with that contentment cheer me,
 As if half the world did hear me.

But because I am assured,
 All are either so conjured,
 As they will my song attend
 With the patience of a friend ;
 Or at least, take note, that I
 Care not much ; now willingly
 I these goodly colours lay,
 Wind nor rain shall wear away.
 But retain their purest glass,
 When the statues made of brass
 For some prince's more renown
 Shall be wholly overthrown ;
 Or, consum'd with canker'd rust,
 Lie neglected in the dust.

And my reason gives direction,
 When I sing of such perfection,
 First, those beauties to declare,
 Which, though her's, without her are.

To advance her fame, I find,
 Those are of a triple kind.
 Privileges she hath store,
 At her birth, since, and before.
 From before her birth the fame
 She of high descents may claim ;
 Whose well-gotten honours may
 Her deserving more display ;
 For from heavenly race she springs,
 And from high and mighty kings.

At her birth, she was by Fate
 In those parents fortunate,
 Whose estates and virtues stood
 Answerable to their blood.

Then, the nation, time, and place,
 To the rest may add some grace.
 For the people, with the clime,
 And the fashions of the time,
 In all of which she hath been blest
 By enjoying them at best,
 Do not only mend the features,
 But oft-times make better natures :
 Whereas those who hap not so,
 Both deform'd and ruder grow.

In those climes and latter days,
 To deserve sweet Beauty's praise,
 Where so many females dwell,
 That each seemeth to excel,
 In more glory twenty fold
 Than it was in days of old,
 When our ordinary fair ones
 Might have been esteemed rare ones,
 And have made a subject fit
 For their bravest poets' wit.

Little rush-lights, or a spark,
 Shineth fairly in the dark ;
 And to him occasion gives
 That from sight of lesser lives,
 To adore it : yet the ray
 Of one torch will take away
 All the light of twenty more,
 That shin'd very well before.
 So, those pretty beauties, which
 Made the times before us rich,
 Though but sparkles, seem'd a flame,
 Which hath been increas'd by fame,
 And their true affections, who
 Better never liv'd to know.
 Whereas, her if they had seen,
 She had sure adored been,
 And taught ages past to sing
 Sweeter in their sonneting.

Such a ray, so clear, so bright,
 Had out-shined all the light
 Of a thousand such as theirs,
 Who were then esteem'd stars ;
 And would have enlighten'd near
 Half the world's wide hemisphere.
 She is fairest that may pass
 For a fair one, where the lass
 Trips it on the country green
 That may equal Sparta's queen.
 Where, in every street you see
 Throngs of nymphs and ladies be,
 That are fair enough to move
 Angels, and enamour Jove.
 She must matchless features bring,
 That now moves a Muse to sing.

When, as one small province may
 Shew more beauties in a day,
 Than the half of Europe could
 Breed them in an age of old :
 Such is she, and such a lot
 Hath her rare perfection got.

Since her birth, to make the colour
 Of so true a beauty fuller,
 And to give a better grace
 To that sweetness in the face,
 She hath all the furth'rance had
 Noble educations add.
 And not only knoweth all,
 Which our ladies courtship call,
 With those knowledges that do
 Grace her sex, and suit thereto ;
 But she hath attain'd to find,
 What is rare with womankind,
 Excellencies, whereby she
 May in soul delighted be,
 And reap more contentment than
 One of twenty thousand can.

By this means hath better been
 All without her and within :
 For it hath, by adding arts,
 To adorn her native parts,
 Raised to a noble flame,
 Which shall lighten forth her fame,
 Those dear sparks of sacred fire,
 Which the Muses did inspire
 At her birth ; that she complete
 Might with them besit a seat.

But, perhaps I do amiss,
 To insist so long on this :

These are superficial things,
 And but slender shadowings,
 To the work I have in hand ;
 Neither can you understand
 What her excellence may be,
 Till herself describ'd you see.
 Nor can mine, or any pen,
 Paint her half so lovely then,
 As she is indeed. For here
 Might those Deities appear,
 Which young Paris view'd at will
 Naked upon Ida hill ;
 That I from those three might take
 All their beauties, one to make ;
 Those, no question, well compact,
 Would have made up one exact.
 Something yet we miss of might,
 To express her sweetness right :
 Juno's majesty would fit,
 Venus' beauty, Pallas' wit,
 Might have brought to pattern her's
 In some shew'd particulars :
 But they never can express
 Her whole frame or worthiness ;
 With those excellencies which
 Make both soul and body rich.

Pallas sometimes was untoward,
 Venus wanton, Juno froward :
 Yea, all three infected were
 With such faults as women are ;
 And, though falsely deified,
 Frailties had, which she'll deride.

By herself, must therefore she,
 Or by nothing pattern'd be.

And I hope to paint her so,
 By herself, that you shall know
 I have serv'd no common Dame,
 Of mean worth, or vulgar fame ;
 But a Nymph that's fairer than
 Pen or pencil portrait can.
 And to-morrow, if you stray
 Back again this uncouth way,
 I my simple art will show ;
 But, the time prevents me now.
 For, except at yonder glade,
 All the land is under shade ;
 That, before these ewes be told,
 Those my wethers in the fold,
 Ten young wainlings driven down
 To the well beneath the town,
 And my lambkins changed from
 Brome-leaze to the mead at home,
 'Twill be far in night ; and so
 I shall make my father woe
 For my stay, and be in fear
 Somewhat is mischanced here.
 On your way I'll therefore bring you,
 And a song or two I'll sing you,
 Such as I, half in despair,
 Made when first I woo'd my Fair ;
 Whereunto my boy shall play,
 That my voice assist it may.



I.

COME, my Muse, if thou disdain,
 All my comforts are bereft me;
 No delight doth now remain;
 I nor friend, nor flock have left me.
 They are scattered on the plain.

Men, alas! are too severe,
 And make scoffs at lovers' fortunes;
 Women, hearted like the bear,
 That regards not who importunes,
 But doth all in pieces tear.

If I should my sorrows show
 Unto rivers, springs, or fountains,
 They are senseless of my woe;
 So are groves, and rocks, and mountains.
 Then, oh whither shall I go?

Means of harbour me to shield
 From despair, ah, know you any;
 For, nor city, grange, nor field,
 Though they lend content to many,
 Unto me can comfort yield.

I have wept and sighed too,
 For compassion to make trial;
 Yea, done all that words can do,
 Yet have nothing but denial.
 What way is there then to woo?

Shall I swear, protest, and vow?

So have I done most extremely :
Should I die? I know not how :

For, from all attempts unseemly
Love and Virtue keeps me now.

I have heard that Time prevails ;

But I fear me 'tis a fable :

Time, and all endeavour fails :

To bear more my heart's unable,
Yet none careth what it ails.

Lines to some have op'd the door,

And got entrance for affection :

Words, well spoken, much implore

By the gestures' good direction ;

But a look doth ten times more.

'Tis the eye that only reads

To the heart love's deepest lectures.

By a moving look it pleads,

More than common sense conjectures ;

And a way to pity leads.

This, I knowing, did observe,

Both by words and looks complaining,

Yet for pity I may starve ;

There's no hope of my obtaining,

'Till I better can deserve.

Yea, and he that thinks to win

By desert, may be deceived,

For, they who have worthiest been,

Of their right have been bereaved,

And a groom admitted in.

Wherefore, Muse, to thee I call;
 Thou, since nothing else avails me,
 Must redeem me from my thrall.
 If thy sweet enchantment fails me,
 Then adieu love, life, and all.



II.

TELL me, my heart, what Thoughts these pantings move?
 My Thoughts of LOVE.
 What Flames are these, that set thee so on fire?
 Flames of DESIRE.
 What Means hast thou, contentment's flower to crop?
 No Means but HOPE.
 Yet let us feed on Hope, and Hope tho best,
 For they, amid their griefs, are something blest,
 Whose Thoughts, and Flames, and Means, have such free
 scope,
 They may at once both LOVE, DESIRE, and HOPE.

But say, what Fruit will love at last obtain?
 Fruitless DISDAIN.
 What will those Hopes prove, which yet seem so fair?
 Hopeless DESPAIR.
 What End shall run those passions out of breath?
 An endless DEATH.

Oh, can there be such cruelty in Love?
 And doth my Fortune so ungentle prove,
 She will no Fruit, nor Hope, nor Evil bequeath,
 But cruellest DISDAIN, DESPAIR, and DEATH?

Then what new Study shall I now apply?

Study to DIE.

How might I end my Care, and die content?

Care to REPENT.

And what good Thoughts may make my end more holy?

Think on thy FOLLY.

Yes, so I will, and since my Fate can give

No Hope, but ever without Hope to live,

My Studies, Cares, and Thoughts, I'll all apply,

To weigh my FOLLY well, REPENT, and DIE.



SAD Eyes, what do you ail,

To be thus ill disposed?

Why doth your sleeping fail,

Now all men's else are closed?

Wast I, that ne'er did bow

In any servile duty;

And will you make me now

A slave to love and beauty?

What though thy Mistress smile,

And in her love affects thee?

Let not her eye beguile,

I fear she disrespects thee.

Do not, poor heart, depend

On those vain thoughts that fill thee,

They'll fail thee in the end,

So much thy passions kill thee.

What hopes have I, that she
 Will hold her favours ever,
 When so few women be,
 That constant can persevere?
 Whate'er she do protest,
 When fortunes do deceive me,
 Then she, with all the rest,
 I fear, alas ! will leave me.

Whilst youth and strength remains,
 With art that may commend her,
 Perhaps she nought disdains
 Her servant should attend her.
 But, it is one to ten,
 If crosses overtake me,
 She will not know me then,
 But scorn, and so forsake me.

Shall then in earnest truth
 My careful eyes observe her?
 Shall I consume my youth,
 And short my time to serve her?
 Shall I, beyond my strength,
 Let passion's torments prove me,
 To hear her say, at length,
 ' Away, I cannot love thee ?'

Oh, rather let me die,
 Whilst I thus gentle find her,
 'Twere worse than death, if I
 Should find she proves unkind.
 One frown, though but in jest,
 Or one unkindness, feigned,
 Would rob me of more rest
 Than e'er could be regained.

But, in her eyes I find
 Such signs of pity moving,
 She cannot be unkind ;
 Nor err, nor fail in loving.
 And on her forehead this
 Seems written to relieve me :
 My heart no joy shall miss
 That Love or She can give me.

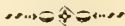
Which, if I find, I vow
 My service shall persever ;
 The same that I am now
 I will continue ever.
 No other's high degree,
 Nor beauteous look shall change me :
 My love shall constant be,
 And no estate estrange me.

When other noble Dames,
 By greater men attended,
 Shall with their lives and names
 Have all their glories ended :
 With fairest Queens shall she
 Sit sharing equal glory ;
 And times to come shall be
 Delighted with our story.

In spite of others hates,
 More honour I will do her,
 Than those that with estates
 And helps of fortune woo he .
 Yea, that true worth I spy,
 Though monarchs strove to grace it,
 They should not reach more high
 Than I dare hope to place it.

And though I never vaunt
What favours are possessed,
Much less content I want,
Than if they were expressed.
Let others make their mirth,
To blab each kiss or toying ;
I know no bliss on earth
Like secret love enjoying.

And this shall be the worst
Of all that can betide me,
If I, like some accurst,
Should find my hopes deride me :
My cares will not be long,
I know which way to mend them ;
I'll think who did the wrong,
Sigh, break my heart, and end them.



HAIL, fair Beauties, and again
 Hail to all your goodly train!
 What I promis'd yesterday,
 If it please you, hear ye may ;
 For, now once begun have I,
 Sing I will, though none were by.
 And, though freely on I run,
 Yet confused paths to shun ;
 First, that part shall be disclos'd
 That's of Elements compos'd.
 There, the two unequal pair,
 Water, Fire, Earth, Air,
 Each one suiting a complexion,
 Have so cunning a commixion,
 As they, in proportion sweet,
 With the rarest temper meet.
 Either in as much as needeth,
 So as neither ought exceedeth.
 This pure substance is the same
 Which the Body we do name :
 Were that of immortal stuff,
 'Tis refin'd and pure enough
 To be call'd a Soul ; for sure
 Many Souls are not so pure.
 I, that with a serious look
 Note of this rare Model took,
 Find that Nature in their places
 So well couched all the Graces,
 As the curious't eyes that be
 Cannot blot nor blemish see.

Like a pine, it groweth straight,
 Reaching an approved height ;

And hath all the choice perfections
 That inflame the best affections.
 In the motion of each part,
 Nature seems to strive with Art,
 Which her gestures most shall bless
 With the gifts of pleasingness.

When she sits, methinks I see
 How all virtues fixed be
 In a frame, whose constant mould
 Will the same unchanged hold.
 If you note her when she moves,
 Cytherea drawn with doves,
 May come learn such winning motions,
 As will gain to love's devotions
 More than all her painted wiles,
 Such as tears, or sighs, or smiles.

Some, whose bodies want true graces,
 Have sweet features in their faces ;
 Others, that do miss them there,
 Lovely are some other where ;
 And to our desires do fit
 In behaviour or in wit ;
 Or some inward worth appearing,
 To the soul the soul endearing.
 But in her your eye may find
 All that's good in Womankind.
 What in others we prefer,
 Are but sundry parts of her ;
 Who, most perfect, doth present
 What might one and all content.
 Yea, he that in love still ranges,
 And each day or hourly changes,
 Had he judgment but to know
 What perfection in her grow,

There would find the spring of store,
Swear a faith, and change no more.

Neither in the total frame
Is she only void of blame ;
But each part, survey'd asunder,
Might beget both love and wonder
If you dare to look so high,
Or behold such majesty,
Lift your wondering eyes and see
Whether ought can better'd be.

There's her Hair, with which Love angles,
And beholders' eyes entangles :
For in those fair curled snares
They are hamper'd unawares,
And compell'd to swear a duty
To her sweet enthralling beauty.
In my mind 'tis the most fair
That was ever called hair ;
Somewhat brighter than a brown,
And her tresses waving down
At full length, and so dispread,
Mantles her from foot to head.

If you saw her arched brow,
Tell me, pray, what art knows how
To have made it in a line
More exact, or more divine.
Beauty there may be descried
In the height of all her pride ;
'Tis a meanly rising plain,
Whose pure white hath many a vein,
Interlacing like the springs
In the earth's enamellings.
If the tale be not a toy
Of the little winged Boy,

When he means to strike a heart,
 Thence he throws the fatal dart,
 Which of wounds still makes a pair,
 One of Love, one of Despair.

Round her visage, or so near
 To a roundness doth appear,
 That no more of length it takes,
 Than what best proportion makes.

Short her Chin is, and yet so
 As it is just long enow:
 Lovcliness doth seem to glory
 In that circling promontory.
 Pretty moving features skip
 'Twixt that hillock and the lip,
 If you note her but the while
 She is pleas'd to speak or smile.

And her lips, that show no dulness,
 Full are, in the meanest fulness:
 Those, the leaves be, whose unfolding
 Brings sweet pleasures to beholding;
 For such pearls they do disclose,
 Both the Indies match not those;
 Yet are so in order placed,
 As their whiteness is more graced.
 Each part is so well disposed,
 And her dainty mouth composed,
 So as there is no distortion
 Misbeseems that sweet proportion.

When her ivory teeth she buries
 'Twixt her two enticing cherries,
 There appears such pleasures hidden,
 As might tempt what were forbidden.
 If you look again the whites,
 She doth part those lips in smiles.

'Tis as when a flash of light
Breaks from heaven to glad the night.

Other parts my pencil crave ;
But those lips I cannot leave ;
For, methinketh, I should go
And forsake those cherries so :
There's a kind of excellence
Holds me from departing hence.
I would tell you what it were,
But my cunning fails me there.
They are like, in their discloses,
To the morning's dewy roses,
That beside the name of fair,
Cast perfumes that sweet the air.
Melting soft her kisses be,
And had I now two or three,
More inspired by their touch,
I had prais'd them twice as much.

But, sweet Muses, mark ye how
Her fair eyes do check me now,
That I seem'd to pass them so,
And their praises overgo :
And yet blame me not, that I
Would so fain have pass'd them by ;
For I feared to have seen them,
Lest there were some danger in them.
Yet, such gentle looks they lend,
As might make her foe a friend ;
And by their allurings move
All beholders unto love.
Such a power is also there
As will keep those thoughts in fear,
And command enough, I saw,
To hold impudence in awe.

There may he, that knows to love,
 Read contents, which are above
 Their ignoble aims who know
 Nothing that so high doth grow.
 Whilst she me beholding is,
 My heart dares not think amiss ;
 For her sight, most piercing clear,
 Seems to see what's written there.

Those bright Eyes, that with their light
 Often-times have bless'd my sight,
 And, in turning thence their shining,
 Left me in sad darkness pining,
 Are the rarest, loveliest gray,
 And do cast forth such a ray,
 As the man, that black prefers,
 More would like this grey of her's.

When their matchless beams she shrouds,
 'Tis like Cynthia hid in clouds.

If again she show them light,
 'Tis like morning after night.
 And 'tis worthy well beholding
 With how many a pretty folding,
 Her sweet eye-lids grace that fair,
 Meanly fring'd with beaming hair ;
 Whereby neatly overspread,
 Those bright lamps are shadowed.

'Twixt the Eyes no hollow place,
 Wrinkle, nor undecent space,
 Disproportions her in ought,
 Though by Envy faults were sought.

On those Eye-brows never yet
 Did disdainful Scowling sit.
 Love and Goodness, gotten thither,
 Sit on equal thrones together ;

And do throw just scorn on them,
That their government contemn.

Then, almost obscur'd, appears
Those her jewel-gracing Ears,
Whose own beauties more adorn
Than the richest pearl that's worn
By the proudest Persian dames,
Or the best that Nature frames :
There the voice, in Love's meanders,
Those their pretty circlings wanders,
Whose rare turnings will admit
No rude speech to enter it.

Stretching from mount Forehead, lies
Beauty's Cape betwixt her eyes ;
Which two crystal-passing lakes,
Love's delightful isthmus makes ;
Neither more nor less extending
Than most meriteth commending.
Those in whom that part hath been
Best deserving praises seen ;
Or, survey'd without affection,
Came the nearest to perfection,
Would scarce handsome ones appear,
If with her compar'd they were ;
For it is so much excelling,
That it passeth means of telling.

On the either side of this
Love's most lovely prospect is.
Those her smiling Cheeks, whose colour
Comprehends true beauty fuller
Than the curious't mixtures can,
That are made by art of man.
It is Beauty's garden plot,
Where, as in a true-love knot,

So the snowy lily grows,
 Mixed with the crimson rose,
 That, as friends, they joined be ;
 Yet they seem to disagree,
 Whether of the two shall reign ;
 And the lilies oft obtain
 Greatest sway, unless a blush
 Help the roses at a push.
 Hollow fallings none there are ;
 There's no wrinkle, there's no scar :
 Only there's a little mole,
 Which from Venus' cheek was stole.

 If it were a thing in Nature
 Possible, that any creature
 Might decaying life repair
 Only by the help of air ;
 There were no such salve for death,
 As the balm of her sweet breath.
 Or, if any human power
 Might detain the soul an hour,
 From the flesh to dust bequeathing,
 It would linger on her breathing ;
 And be hale in mind, that there
 More than mortal pleasures were ;
 And whose fortune were so fair
 As to draw so sweet an air,
 Would, no doubt, let slighted lie
 The perfumes of Araby.
 For the English eglantine
 Doth through envy of her pine.
 Violets and roses too,
 Fears that she will them undo :
 And it seems that in her breast
 Is compos'd the phoenix' nest.

But descend a while, mine eye,
 See if polish'd ivory,
 Or the finest fleeced flocks,
 Or the whitest Albion rocks,
 For comparisons may stand,
 To express that snowy hand.
 When she draws it from her glove,
 It hath virtue to remove,
 Or disperse, if there be ought,
 Cloudeth the beholder's thought.
 If that palm but toucheth your,
 You shall feel a secret power
 Cheer your heart, and glad it more,
 Though it droop'd with grief before.

Through the veins, disposed true,
 Crimson yields a sapphire hue,
 Which adds grace, and more delight,
 By embracing with the white.
 Smooth, and moist, and soft, and tender
 Are her palms; the fingers slender;
 Tipt with mollified pearl.
 And if that transformed girl,
 Whose much cunning made her dare
 With Jove's daughter to compare,
 Had that hand worn, maugre spite,
 She had sham'd the Goddess quite:
 For there is in every part
 Nature perfecter than art.

These were joined to those arms,
 That were never made for harms;
 But possess the sweetest graces
 That may apt them for embraces.
 Like the silver streams they be,
 Which from some high hill we see

Clipping in a goodly vale,
That grows proud of such a thrall.

Neither alabaster rocks,
Pearl-strew'd shores, nor Cotswold flocks,
Nor the mountains tipt with snow,
Nor the milk-white swans of Po,
Can appear so fair to me,
As her spotless shoulders be :
They are like some work of state,
Cover'd with the richest plate ;
And a presence have, that strike
With devotions, Goddess-like.

'Twixt those shoulders, meanly spread,
To support that globe-like head,
Riseth up her neck, wherein,
Beauty seemeth to begin
To disclose itself, in more
Tempting manner than before.
How, therein she doth excell,
Though I would, I cannot tell ;
For, I nought on earth espy,
That I may express it by.

There, should lovers as in duty,
Hang rich trophies up to Beauty :
'Tis proportion'd to a height,
That is even with delight.
Yet, it is a great deal higher,
Than to answer base desire.

Where the neck hath end, begins
That smooth path, where love's close gins
Are thick placed to inthrall,
Such as that way straggle shall :
There a pleasing passage lies,
Far beyond the sight of eyes :

And much more delight contains,
Than the old Elysian plains.

Whatsoever others say,
There's alone the Milky-way ;
That to Beauty's walks doth go,
Which, if others came to know,
In possessing their delight,
They should never reach the height
Of the pleasures which I share,
Whilst that those debarred are.

Yet, unspoken of, there rests,
Her two twin-like lovely breasts,
Whose round-rising, pretty panting,
I would tell, but art is wanting :
Words can never well declare,
Her fair sweet perfections there :
For, would measures give me leave,
To express what I conceive,
I do know I should go near,
Half to ravish all that hear :
And, but that I learn to season
What I apprehend with reason,
It had made my passion's weight
Sink me through my own conceit :
There I find so large a measure,
Of an unexpressed pleasure,
That my heart, through strong surmise,
In a pleasing fainting lies.

He that there may rest to prove,
Softer finds those beds of love,
Than the cotton ripest grown,
Or fine pillows of such down,
As in time of molting, fans
From the breasts of silver swans.

Those two sisters are a pair
 Smooth alike, like soft, like fair,
 If together they be viewed:
 Yet, if they apart be shewed,
 That you touch, or see, seems smoother,
 Softer, fairer, than the other.

That the colour may delight,
 So much red as makes the white
 Purer seem, is shed among;
 And then here and there along,
 Runs a sapphire mine, whose blue
 Shadow'd, makes so brave a shew
 On those lily mounts, as though
 Beauty's simples there did grow:
 In the vale, 'twixt either hill,
 Lies Desire in ambush still,
 And surprizeth every eye,
 Which doth that way dare to pry.

There, is sure the twy-top hill,
 Where the poets learn their skill:
 That's Parnassus where the Muses,
 Chaste, and wise Minerva uses.
 Her two cherrylets are those
 Whence the pleasant'st nectar flows;
 And no fruits e'er equall'd these,
 Fetch'd from the Hesperides.

Ouce, as Cynthia's games she chased,
 And for air left half unlaced,
 Her light summer robe of green,
 (Beauty's safe, but slender skreen)
 Unawares, I partly spi'd,
 That fair lily field unhid,
 Which you may her belly name;
 Yet, nor she, nor I to blame:

For, it was but what mine eye
Might behold with modesty.

'Tis a fair and matchless plain,
Where unknown delights remain;
'Tis the storehouse wherein Pleasure
Hides the richest of her treasure:
Which, true Modesty (in ward)
Keeps with a continual guard
Of such virtues, as she's sure
No corruption can allure.

There they say, (for mind it well)
I do this by hearsay tell,
Grows her navel, which doth seem,
Like some jewel of esteem;
With so wond'rous cunning wrought,
That an injury 'tis thought,
Such a beauty, with the rest,
Should, unknown, be unexpress.

Somewhat else there is that's hidden,
Which to name I am forbidden;
Neither have I ever pried
After that should be unspied.
Never shall my maiden Muse
So herself and me abuse,
As to sing, what I may fear,
Will offend the choicest ear:
Though I know, if none be by,
But true friends to modesty,
I might name each part at will,
And yet no man's thought be ill.

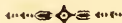
Yet, for fear loose hearers may
Judge amiss, if more I say;
I'll descend, to shun all blame,
To the pillars of this frame:

Where, though I ne'er aim'd so high,
 As her dainty youthful thigh;
 (Whose rare softness, smoothness, fulness,
 Being known, would teach my dulness
 Such a strain, as might befit
 Some brave Tuscan poet's wit)
 Once a saucy bush I spy'd,
 Pluck her silken skirts aside,
 So discovered unto me,
 All those beauties to the knee :
 And, before the thorns entanglings
 Had let go the silver spanglings,
 I perceiv'd the curious knitting,
 Of those joints were well befitting,
 Such a noble piece of work ;
 'Mongst whose turnings seem'd to lurk
 Much to entertain the sight
 With new objects of delight.

Then the leg for shape as rare,
 Will admit of no compare :
 Straight it is, the ankle lean,
 Full the calf, but in the mean ;
 And the slender foot doth fit
 So each way to suit with it,
 As she nothing less excels
 Therein, than in all things else :
 Yea, from head to foot her feature
 Shews her an unblemish'd creature ;
 In whom love with reason, might
 Find so matchless a delight :
 That more cannot be acquired,
 Nor a greater bliss desired.

Yet, if you will rest an hour,
 Under yonder shady bower ;

I, anon my muse will raise
To a higher pitch of praise.
But awhile with raspice-berries,
Strawberries, ripe pears, and cherries,
(Such as these our groves do bear)
We will cool our palates there.
And those homely cates among,
Now and then a pastoral song
Shall my lad here sing and play,
Such as you had yesterday.



I.

A LAD whose faith will constant prove,
 And never know an end;
 Late by an oversight in love,
 Displeas'd his dearest friend:
 For which, incens'd, she did retake
 The favours which he wore;
 And said, he never for her sake
 Should wear or see them more.

The grief whereof, how near it went,
 And how unkindly took;
 Was figur'd by the discontent
 Appearing in his look.
 At first, he could not silence break,
 (So heavy sorrow lay)
 But when his sighs gave way to speak,
 Thus sadly did he say:

My only dear; and with that speech,
 Not able to sustain
 The floods of grief at sorrow's breach,
 He paus'd awhile again.
 At length (nigh fainting) did express
 These words, with much ado;
 Oh dear! let not my love's excess
 Me and my love undo.

She, little moved with his pain,
 His much distraction ey'd;

And changing love into disdain,
 Thus, still unkind, replied :
 Forbear to urge one kindness more,
 Unless you long to see,
 The good respect you had before,
 At once all lost in me.

With that, dismay'd, his suit he ceas'd,
 And down his head he hung;
 And, as his reason's strength decreas'd,
 His passion grew more strong.
 But seeing she did slight his moan,
 (With willow garlands wreath'd)
 He sat him down, and all alone,
 This sad complaint he breath'd.

Oh Heavens! quoth he, why do we spend
 Endeavours thus in vain;
 Since what the Fates do fore-intend,
 They never change again?
 Nor faith, nor love, nor true desert,
 Nor all that man can do,
 Can win him place within her heart,
 That is not born thereto.

Why do I fondly waste my youth
 In secret sighs and tears?
 Why to preserve a spotless truth,
 Taste I so many cares?
 For, women that no worth respect,
 Do so ungentle prove,
 That some shall win by their neglect,
 What others lose with love.

Those that have set the best at naught,
 And no man could enjoy ;
 At last, by some base gull are caught,
 And gotten with a toy ;
 Yea, they that spend an age's light,
 Their favours to obtain ;
 For one unwilling oversight
 May lose them all again.

How glad, and fain, alas would I,
 For her have underwent
 The greatest care, ere she should try
 The smallest discontent?
 Yet she, that may my life command,
 And doth my passions know,
 Denieth me a poor demand,
 In height of all my woe.

Oh, if the noblest of her time,
 And best belov'd of me,
 Could for so poor, so slight a crime,
 So void of pity be :
 Sure, had it been some common one,
 Whose patience I had tried,
 No wonder I had been undone,
 Or unforgiven died.

A thousand lives I would have laid,
 So well I once believ'd,
 She would have deign'd to lend me aid,
 If she had seen me griev'd,
 But now I live to see the day,
 Where I presumed so,

I neither dare for pity pray,
Nor tell her of my woe.

Yet, let not poor despised heart,
Her worth ought question'd be ;
Hadst thou not failed in desert,
She had not failed thee.
But lest, perhaps, they flout thy moan,
That should esteem thee dear ;
Go, make it by thyself alone,
Where none may come to hear.

Still keep thy forehead crown'd with smiles,
What passion e'er thou try ;
That none may laugh at thee the whiles,
Thou discontented lye.
And let no wrong, by change distain
A love so truly fair ;
But rather, never hope again,
And thou shalt ne'er despair.



II.

O'ERTIRED by cruel passions that oppress me,
(With heart nigh broken, Time no hope would give me)
Upon my bed I laid me down to rest me ;
And gentle sleep I wooed to relieve me.
But oh, alas ! I found that on the morrow
My sleeping joys brought forth my waking sorrow.

For lo, a dream I had so full of pleasure,
 That to possess what to embrace I seemed,
 Could not effect my joy in higher measure,
 Than now it grieves me that I have but dreamed.
 Oh let my dreams be sighs and tears hereafter;
 So I, that sleeping weep, may wake in laughter.

Fain would I tell how much that shadow pleas'd me;
 But tongue and pen want words, and art in telling.
 Yet, this I'll say, to shew what horror seiz'd me;
 (When I was robb'd of bliss, so much excelling)
 Might all my dreams be such; oh let me never
 Awake again: but sleep and dream for ever.

For when I waking saw myself deceived,
 And what an inward hell it had procured,
 To find myself of all my hopes bereaved,
 It brought on passions not to be endured:
 And, knew I, next night had such dreams in keeping,
 I'd make my eyes forswear for ever sleeping.



III.

You woody hills, you dales, you groves,
 You floods, and every spring,
 You creatures come, whom nothing moves,
 And hear a Shepherd sing.
 For to heroës, nymphs, and swains,
 I long have made my moan:
 Yet, what my mournful verse contains,
 Is understood of none.

In song Apollo gave me skill,
 Their love, his sisters deign :
 With those that haunt Parnassus hill
 I friendship entertaine.
 Yet, this is all in vain to me,
 So haplessly I fare,
 As those things which my glory be,
 My cause of ruin are.

For Love hath kindled in my breast
 His never quenched fire ;
 And I, who often have exprest,
 What other men desire,
 (Because I could so dive into
 The depth of others' moan)
 Now I my own affliction shew,
 I heeded am of none.

Oft have the Nymphs of greatest worth
 Made suit my songs to hear :
 As oft (when I have sighed forth,
 Such notes as saddest were)
 Alas! said they, poor gentle heart,
 Whoe'er that Shepherd be ;
 But, none of them suspects my smart,
 Nor thinks it meaneth me.

When I have reach'd so high a strain
 Of passion in my song ;
 That they have seen the tears to rain
 And thrill my cheek along :
 Instead of sigh, or weeping eye,
 To sympathize with me ;

Oh, were he once in love, they cry,
How moving would he be?

Oh pity me, you powers above,
And take my skill away;
Or, let my hearers think I love,
And feign not what I say,
For, if I could disclose the smart,
Which I unknown do bear,
Each line would make them sighs impart,
And every word a tear.

Had I a Mistress, some do think,
She should revealed be;
And I would favours wear, or drink
Her health upon my knee.
Alas, poor fools! they aim awry,
Their fancy flags too low;
Could they my love's rare course espy,
They would amazed grow.

But, let nor Nymph nor Swain conceive,
My tongue shall ever tell,
Who of this rest, doth me bereave,
Or where I am not well.
But, if you sighing me espy,
Where rarest features be;
Mark where I fix a weeping eye,
And swear you, There is she.

Yet, ere my eyes betray me shall,
I'll swell and burst with pain;
And, for each drop they would let fall,
My heart shall bleed me twain.

For since my soul more sorrow bears,
 Than common lovers know,
I scorn my passion should, like theirs,
 A common humour show.

Ear never heard of, heretofore,
 Of any love like mine,
Nor shall there be for evermore,
 Affection so divine.
And that to feign it, none may try,
 When I dissolv'd must be ;
The first I am, it lived by,
 And die it shall with me.



Boy, ha' done; for now my brain
 Is inspir'd afresh again,
 And new raptures pressing are,
 To be sung in praise of her;
 Whose fair picture lieth nigh,
 Quite unveil'd to ev'ry eye.
 No small favour hath it been
 That such beauty might be seen;
 Therefore, ever may they rue it,
 Who with evil eyes shall view it.
 Yea, what ancient stories tell,
 Once to rude Acteon fell,
 (When with evil thoughts he stood
 Eyeing Cynthia in the flood)
 May that fatal horned curse
 Light upon them; or a worse!

But (whatever others be)
 Lest some fault be found in me,
 If imperfect this remain,
 I will over-trim't again.
 Therefore turn where we begun,
 And now all is overrun.
 Mark, if every thing exprest,
 Suit not so unto the rest,
 As if Nature would prefer
 All perfections unto her.
 Wherefore seems it strange to any,
 That they daily see so many,
 Who were else most perfect creatures,
 In some one part, want true features?
 Since from all the fair'st that live,
 Nature took the best, to give

Her perfection in each part.
 I, alone, except her heart;
 For, among all womankind,
 Such as hers is hard to find.

If you truly note her face,
 You shall find it hath a grace,
 Neither wanton, nor o'er-serious,
 Nor too yielding, nor imperious:
 But, with such a feature blest,
 It is that which pleaseth best:
 And delights each several eye,
 That affects with modesty.
 Lowliness hath in her look
 Equal place with greatness took.
 And, if Beauty (any where)
 Claims prerogatives, 'tis there.
 For, at once, thus much 'twill do;
 Threat, command, persuade, and woo.

In her speech there is not found
 Any harsh displeasing sound,
 But a well beseeming power;
 Neither higher, neither lower,
 Than will suit with her perfection.
 'Tis the loadstone of affection.
 And that man, whose judging eyes
 Could well sound such mysteries,
 Would in love make her his choice,
 Though he did but hear her voice.
 For such accents breathe not, whence
 Beauty keeps non-residence.
 Never word of hers I hear,
 But 'tis music to mine ear;
 And, much more contentment brings,
 Than the sweetly touched strings

Of the pleasing lute, whose strains
 Ravish hearers when it plains.
 Rais'd by her discourse, I fly
 In contented thoughts so high,
 That I pass the common measures
 Of the dulled Sense's pleasures;
 And, leave far below my flight,
 Vulgar pitches of delight.

 If she smile and merry be,
 All about her are as she.
 For each looker-on takes part
 Of the joy that's in her heart.

 If she grieve, or you but spy,
 Sadness peeping through her eye;
 Such a grace it seems to borrow,
 That you'll fall in love with sorrow;
 And abhor the name of mirth,
 As the hateful'st thing on earth.
 Should I see her shed a tear,
 My poor eyes would melt, I fear.
 For much more in her's appears
 Than in other women's tears:
 And her look did never fain
 Sorrow, where there was no pain.

 Seldom has she been espied
 So impatient as to chide;
 For, if any see her so,
 They'll in love with anger grow.
 Sigh, or speak, or smile, or talk,
 Sing, or weep, or sit, or walk,
 Every thing that she doth do,
 Decent is, and lovely too.
 Each part that you shall behold
 Hath within itself inroll'd.

What you could desire to see,
 (Or your heart conceive to be)
 Yet, if from that part your eye
 Moving shall another spy;
 There you see as much or more
 Than you thought to praise before.

While the eye surveys it, you
 Will imagine that her brow
 Hath all beauty; when her cheek
 You behold, it is as like
 To be deemed fairest too.
 (So much there can beauty do)
 Look but once upon her eye,
 And you'll wonder by and by,
 How there may be any where
 So much worthy praise as there.
 Yet, if you survey her breast,
 Then as freely you'll protest,
 That in them perfection is;
 Though (I know) that one poor kiss
 From her tempting lips, would then,
 Make all that forsworn again.
 For, the selfsame moving grace,
 Is at once in every place.

She her beauty never foils
 With your ointments, waters, oils,
 Nor no loathsome fucus settles,
 Mix'd with Jewish fasting spittles.
 Fair by Nature, being born,
 She doth borrowed beauty scorn.
 Whoso kisses her, needs fear
 No unwholesome varnish there.
 For, from thence he only sips
 The pure nectar of her lips.

And at once with these he closes,
Melting rubies, cherries, roses.

Then in her behaviour she
Striveth but herself to be :
Keeping such a decent state,
As, indeed, she seems to hate
Precious leisure should be spent
In abused compliment.
Though she knows what others do,
(And can all their courtship to)
She is not in so ill case
As to need their borrowed grace.

Her discourses sweeten'd are
With a kind of artless care,
That expresseth greater art,
Than affected words impart.
So her gestures (being none,
But that freeness which alone,
Suits the braveness of her mind)
Make her of herself to find,
Postures more becoming far,
Than the mere acquired are.

If you mark when for her pleasure,
She vouchsafes to foot a measure,
Though with others' skill she pace,
There's a sweet delightful grace
In herself; which doth prefer
Art beyond that art in her.

Neither needs she beat her wit
To devise what dressing's fit.
Her complexion, and her feature,
So beholding are to Nature;
If she in the fashions go,
All the reason she doth so,

Is, because she would not err
 In appearing singular,
 Doubtless, not for any thought,
 That 'twill perfect her in aught.

Many a dainty-seeming dame
 Is in native beauties lame.
 Some are graced by their tyres,
 As their quoifs, their hats, their wires.
 One a ruff doth best become;
 Falling bands much altereth some.
 And their favours oft we see,
 Changed as their dressings be.
 Which her beauty never fears;
 For, it graceth all she wears.
 If ye note her tyre to-day,
 That doth suit her best, you'll say,
 Mark what she next morn doth wear;
 That becomes her best you'll swear.
 Yea, as oft as her you see,
 Such new graces still there be;
 As she ever seemeth grac't
 Most by that she weareth last.
 Though it be the same she wore
 But the very day before.

When she takes her tyres about her,
 (Never half so rich without her)
 At the putting on of them,
 You may liken every gem
 To those lamps which at a play,
 Are set up to light the day.
 For their lustre adds no more
 To what Titan gave before;
 Neither doth their pretty gleamings
 Hinder ought his greater beamings.

And yet (which is strange to me)
 When those costly deckings be
 Laid away, there seem descri'd
 Beauties which those veils did hide.
 And she looks as doth the moon,
 Past some cloud through which she shone:
 Or, some jewel watch, whose case,
 Set with diamonds, seems to grace
 What it doth contain within:
 Till the curious work be seen,
 Then, 'tis found, that costly shringing,
 Did but hinder t'other's shining.

If you chance to be in place
 When her mantle she doth grace;
 You would presently protest
 Irish dressings were the best.
 If again she lay it down
 While you view her in a gown;
 And how those her dainty limbs
 That close-bodied garment trims,
 You would swear, and swear again,
 She appeared loveliest then.

But if she so truly fair,
 Should untie her shining hair,
 And at length that treasure shed;
 Jove's endured Ganymede,
 Neither Cytherea's joy,
 Nor the sweet self-loving Boy,
 (Who in beauty did surpass)
 Nor the fair'st that ever was,
 Could, to take you prisoner, bring
 Looks so sweetly conquering.

She excels her, whom Apollo,
 Once with weeping eyes did follow:

Or that Nymph, who shut in towers,
 Was beguil'd with golden showers ;
 Yea, and she whose love was wont
 To swim o'er the Hellespont.
 For her sake (though in attire
 Fittest to inflame desire)
 Seem'd not half so fair to be,
 Nor so lovely as is she.
 For the man whose happy eye
 Views her in full majesty ;
 Knows she hath a power that moves
 More than doth the Queen of Loves,
 When she useth all her power
 To inflame her paramour.

And sometimes I do admire,
 All men burn not with desire :
 Nay, I muse her servants are not
 Pleading love ; but oh they dare not.
 And I therefore wonder why
 They do not grow sick and die.

Sure they would do so, but that
 By the ordinance of Fate,
 There is some concealed thing,
 So each gazer limiting ;
 He can see no more of merit
 Than beseems his worth and spirit :
 For in her a grace there shines
 That o'er-daring thoughts confines ;
 Making worthless men despair
 To be lov'd of one so fair.
 Yea, the Destinies agree,
 Some good judgments blind should be,
 And not gain the power of knowing
 Those rare beauties in her growing,

Reason doth as much imply :
 For, if every judging eye,
 (Which beholdeth her) should there
 Find what excellencies are ;
 All o'ercome by these perfections,
 Would be captive to affections.
 So, in happiness unblest,
 She, for lovers, should not rest.
 This, well heeding, think upon ;
 And, if there be any one,
 Who alloweth not the worth,
 Which my Muse hath painted forth ;
 Hold it no defect in her,
 But that he's ordain'd to err.
 Or, if any female wight
 Should detract from this I write,
 She, I yield, may shew her wit,
 But disparage her no whit.
 For, on earth few women be,
 That from envy's touch are free.
 And whoever Envy knew
 Yield those honours that were due.

Though sometimes my song I raise
 To unused heights of praise,
 (And break forth as I shall please
 Into strange hyperboles)
 'Tis to shew, Conceit hath found
 Worth beyond expression's bound.
 Though her breath I do compare
 To the sweet'st perfumes that are ;
 Or, her eyes that are so bright,
 To the morning's cheerful light :
 Yet, I do it not so much,
 To infer that she is such ;

As to shew, that being blest
 With what merits name of best,
 She appears more fair to me
 Than all creatures else that be.

Her true beauty leaves behind
 Apprehensions in my mind,
 Of more sweetness than all art,
 Or inventions can impart.
 Thoughts too deep to be exprest,
 And too strong to be suppress.
 Which oft raiseth my conceits
 To so unbelieved heights,
 That (I fear) some shallow brain
 Thinks my Muses do but feign.
 Sure he wrongs them if he do;
 For, could I have reached to
 So like strains as these you see,
 Had there been no such as she?
 Is it possible that I,
 Who scarce heard of poesy,
 Should a mere Idea raise
 To as true a pitch of praise,
 As the learned poets could,
 Now, or in the times of old;
 All those real beauties bring
 Honour'd by their sonnetting:
 (Having art, and favours to,
 More t'encourage what they do)
 No; if I had never seen
 Such a beauty, I had been
 Piping in the country shades
 To the homely dairy-maids;
 For a country fiddler's fees,
 Clouted cream, and bread and cheese.

I no skill in Numbers had
 More than every shepherd's Lad,
 Till She taught me strains that were
 Pleasing to her gentle ear.
 Her fair splendour and her worth
 From obscureness drew me forth.
 And, because I had no Muse,
 She herself deign'd to infuse
 All the skill by which I climb
 To these praises in my rhyme:
 Which, if she had pleased to add
 To that art sweet Drayton had,
 Or that happy swain that shall
 Sing Britannia's Pastoral;
 Or to theirs, whose verse set forth,
 Rosalind and Stella's worth;
 They had doubled all their skill
 Gained on Apollo's hill:
 And as much more set her forth,
 As I'm short of them in worth.
 They had unto heights aspired
 Might have justly been admired,
 And in such brave strains had moved,
 As of all had been approved.

I must praise her as I may,
 Which I do mine own rude way;
 Sometime setting forth her glories
 By unheard of allegories.
 Think not, though, my Muse now sings
 Mere absurd or feigned things:
 If to gold I like her hair,
 Or, to stars, her eyes so fair:
 Though I praise her skin by snow,
 Or, by pearls, her double-row;

'Tis that you might gather thence
Her unmatched excellence.

Eyes as fair for eyes hath she
As stars fair for stars may be.
And each part as fair doth show,
In its kind, as white in snow.
'Tis no grace to her at all,
If her hair I sunbeams call;
For, were there a power in art,
So to pourtray every part,
All men might those beauties see,
As they do appear to me.
I would scorn to make compare
With the glorious'st things that are.

Nought I e'er saw fair enow,
But the hair, the hair to show.
Yet some think him overbold
That compares it but to gold.
He, from reason seems to err,
Who commending of his dear,
Gives her lips the ruby's hue,
Or by pearls her teeth doth shew.
But what pearls, what rubies can
Seem so lovely fair to man,
As her lips whom he doth love
When in sweet discourse they move?
Or her lovelier teeth, the while
She doth bless him with a smile.

Stars indeed fair creatures be;
Yet, amongst us, where is he,
Joys not more the while he lies
Sunning in his mistress' eyes,
Than in all the glimmering light
Of a starry winter's night?

Him to flatter, most suppose,
 That prefers before the rose
 Or the lilies (while they grow)
 Or the flakes of new-fal'n snow,
 Her complexion whom he loveth;
 And yet this my Muse approveth.
 For, in such a beauty, meets
 Unexpressed moving sweets;
 That the like unto them no man
 Ever saw but in a Woman.
 Look on Moon, on Stars, on Sun,
 All God's creatures overrun.
 See if all of them presents
 To your mind such sweet contents:
 Or, if you from them can take
 Ought that may a beauty make,
 Shall one half so pleasing prove,
 As is hers whom you do love.
 For, indeed, if there had been
 Other mortal beauties seen,
 Objects for the love of man,
 Vain was their creation than.
 Yea, if this could well be granted,
 Adam might his Eve have wanted.
 But a woman is the creature
 Whose proportion with our nature
 Best agrees; and whose perfections
 Sympathize with our affections:
 And not only finds our senses
 Pleasure in their excellencies,
 But our reason also knows
 Sweetness in them, that outgoes
 Human wit to comprehend,
 Much more, truly, to commend.

Note the beauty of any eye;
 And, if aught you praise it by,
 Leave such passion in your mind,
 Let my Reason's eye be blind.
 Mark, if ever red or white,
 Any where gave such delight,
 As when they have taken place
 In a worthy woman's face.
 He that so much hath not noted,
 Will not, or is grown besotted.

Such as lovers are, conceive,
 What impressions beauty leave;
 And those hearts that fire have took
 By a love-inflaming look:
 These believe what here I say;
 And suppose not that I stray,
 In a word, by setting forth
 Any praise beyond true worth.

And yet wherefore should I care
 What another's censures are,
 Since I know her to be such
 As no praise can be too much?
 All that see her will agree
 In the selfsame mind with me;
 If their wit be worth the having,
 Or their judgment merit craving.
 And the man that kens her not,
 Speaks, at best, he knows not what:
 So his envy or good-will,
 Neither doth her good nor ill.

Then fools' cavils I disdain,
 And call back my Muse again,
 To decipher out the rest,
 For I have too long digrest.

This is she in whom there meets
 All variety of sweets.
 An epitome of all
 That on earth we fair may call.
 Nay, yet more I dare aver,
 He that is possess'd of her,
 Shall at once all pleasure find,
 That is reap'd from Woman-kind.

Oh, what man would further range,
 That in one might find such change?
 What dull, eye such worth can see
 And not sworn a lover be?
 Or, from whence was he, could prove
 Such a monster in his love;
 As in thought, to use amiss,
 Such unequal'd worth as this?
 Pity 'twere that such a creature,
 Phœnix-like, for matchless feature,
 Should so suffer; or be blamed,
 With what now the times are shamed.

Beauty (unto me divine)
 Makes my honest thoughts incline
 Unto better things than that,
 Which the vulgar aimeth at.
 And, I vow, I grieve to see
 Any fair and false to be:
 Or, when I sweet pleasures find
 Match'd with a defiled mind.
 But (above all others) Her,
 So much doth my soul prefer;
 That to him whose ill desire
 Should so nurse a lawless fire,
 As to tempt to that, which might
 Dim her sacred virtue's light;

I could wish that he might die
Ere he did it; though 'twere I.

For, if she should hap to stray,
All this beauty would away:
And not her alone undo,
But kill him that praised her too.
But I know her Maker will
Keep her undistained still:
That ensuing ages may
Pattern out by her the way
To all goodness. And if Fate,
That appoints all things a date,
Hear me would; I'd wish that she
Might for aye preserved be.
And that neither wasting cares,
Neither all-consuming years,
Might from what she is estrange her,
Or in mind or body change her.
For oh why should envious Time
Perpetrate so vile a crime,
As to waste, or wrong, or stain,
What shall ne'er be match'd again?

Much I hope it shall not be;
For, if love deceive not me,
To that height of fair she grows,
Age, or sickness, (Beauty's foes)
Cannot so much wrong it there,
But enough there will appear
Ever worthy to be loved:
And that heart shall more be moved,
(Where there is a judging eye)
With those prints it doth espy,
Of her beauty wrong'd by time,
Than by others in their prime.

One advantage she hath more,
 That adds grace to all before.
 It is this; her beauty's fame
 Hath not done her honour shame.
 For, where beauty we do find,
 Envy still is so unkind,
 That, although their virtues are
 Such as pass their beauties far;
 Yet on slander's rocks they be
 Shipwreck'd oftentimes, we see:
 And are subject to the wrongs
 Of a thousand spiteful tongues,
 When the greatest fault they had,
 Was, that some would make them bad;
 And not finding them for action,
 Sought for vengeance by detraction.

But her beauty, sure no tongue
 Is so villainous to wrong.
 Never did the jealous ear
 Any muttering rumour hear,
 That might cause the least suspects
 Of indifferent defects.
 And (which somewhat stranger is)
 They whose slanders few can miss,
 (Though set on by evil will,
 And habituated ill)
 Nothing can of her invent,
 Whence to frame disparagement,
 Which, if we respect the crimes
 Of these loose injurious times,
 Doth not only truly prove
 Great discretion in her love;
 And, that she hath lived upright,
 In each jealous tongue's despight;

But, it must be understood,
 That her private thoughts are good.
 Yea, 'tis an apparent sign
 That her beauty is divine :
 And, that angels have a care,
 Men's polluting tongues should spar
 To defile what God hath given,
 To be dear to earth and heaven.

Tell me, you that hear me now,
 Is there any one of you,
 Wanteth feeling of affection?
 Or that loves not such perfection?
 Can there be so dull an ear
 As of so much worth to hear,
 And not seriously incline
 To this saint-like friend of mine?
 If there be, the fault doth lie,
 In my artless poesy.
 For, if I could reach the strain,
 Which methinks I might obtain;
 Or, but make my measures fly
 Equal with my fantasy ;
 I would not permit an ear
 To attend unravish'd here ;
 If, but so much sense it knew,
 As the blocks that Orpheus drew.

Think on this description well,
 And your noblest ladies tell ;
 Which of you (that worth can see)
 This my Mistress would not be ?

You brave English, who have run
 From the rising of the sun,
 Till in travelling you found
 Where he doth conclude his round ;

You, that have the beauties seen
 Which in farthest lands have been;
 And surveyed the fair resorts
 Of the French and Spanish courts:
 (With the best that Fame renowns,
 In the rich Transalpine towns)
 Do not with our brainless fry
 (That admire each novelty)
 Wrong your country's fame in aught,
 But here freely speak your thought;
 And I durst presume you'll swear
 She's not matched any where.

Gallants, you that would so fain
 Nymphs' and ladies' loves obtain;
 You, that strive to serve and please,
 Fairest queens and empresses;
 Tell me this, and tell me right,
 If ye would not (so you might)
 Leave them all despised to prove
 What contents are in her love?

Could your fathers ever tell
 Of a nymph did more excel?
 Or hath any story told
 Of the like, in times of old?
 Dido was not such a one,
 Nor the Trojan's paragon.
 Though they so much favour found,
 As to have their honours crown'd
 By the best of poets pens,
 Ever known before or since.

For, had Dido been so fair,
 Old Anchises' noble heir,
 Jove's command had disobey'd,
 And with her in Carthage stay'd :

Where'n he would have quite forswore
 Seeing the Lavinian shore.
 Or had Leda's daughter been
 (When she was the Spartan queen)
 Equal with his lovely one,
 Menelaus had never gone
 From her sight so far away,
 As to leave her for a prey ;
 And his room to be possest
 By her wanton Phrygian guest.

But, lest yet among you some
 Think she may behind these come ;
 Stay a little more and hear me :
 In another strain I'll rear me.
 I'll unmasque a beauty now,
 Which to kiss the gods may bow.
 And so feelingly did move,
 That your souls shall fall in love.

I have yet the best behind,
 Her most fair and equal mind.
 This, that I have here exprest,
 Is but that which veils the rest.
 An incomparable shrine
 Of a beauty more divine.

Whereof ere I farther speak,
 Off again my song I'll break.
 And, if you among the roses,
 (Which yon quickset hedge encloses)
 Will with plucking flowers beguile
 Tedious seeming time awhile ;
 Till I step to yonder green
 (Whence the sheep so plain are seen)
 I will be returned, ere
 You an hour have stayed there.

And, excuse me now, I pray,
Though I rudely go away.
For affairs I have to do,
Which, unless I look into,
I may sing out summer here,
Like the idle grasshopper,
And at winter hide my head,
Or else fast till I am dead.

Yet if rustic past'ral measures
Can aught add unto your pleasures,
I will leave you some of those,
Which, it pleased me to compose,
When despairing fits were over,
And I made a happy lover,
Exercis'd my loving passion
In another kind of fashion,
Than to utter I devised,
When I fear'd to be despised.

Those, shall lie in gage for me
Till I back returned be.
And in writing here you have them;
Either sing, or read, or leave them.



SONNET I.

ADMIRE not, shepherd's boy,
 Why I my pipe forbear;
 My sorrows and my joy
 Beyond expression are.

 Though others may
 In songs display
 Their passions when they woo :
 Yet mine do fly
 A pitch too high,
 For words to reach unto.

If such weak thoughts as those
 With other fancies move,
 Or if my breast did close
 But common strains of love :

 Or passion's store
 Learn'd me no more,
 To feel as others do :
 I'd paint my cares,
 As black as theirs,
 And teach my lines to woo.

But oh! thrice happy ye
 Whose mean conceit is dull;
 You from those thoughts are free,
 That stuff my breast so full :

 My love's excess,
 Lets to express,

What songs are used to:
 And my delights
 Take such high flights,
 My joys will me undo.

I have a love that's fair,
 Rich, wise, and nobly born;
 She's true perfection's heir,
 Holds nought but vice in scorn.
 A heart to find,
 More chaste, more kind,
 Our plains afford no moe:
 Of her degree,
 No blab I'll be,
 For doubt some prince should woo.

And yet I do not fear,
 (Though she my meanness knows)
 The willow branch to wear,
 No, nor the yellow hose.
 For if great Jove
 Should sue for love,
 She would not me forego:
 Resort I may,
 By night or day,
 Which braver dare not do.

You gallants born to pelf,
 To lands, to titles store;
 I'm born but to myself,
 Nor do I care for more.
 Add to your earth,
 Wealth, honours, birth,

And all you can thereto ;
 You cannot prove
 That height of love
 Which I in meanness do.

Great men have helps to gain
 Those favours they implore ;
 Which, though I win with pain,
 I find my joys the more.
 Each clown may rise,
 And climb the skies,
 When he hath found a stair ;
 But joy to him,
 That dares to climb,
 And hath no help but air.

Some say that love repents
 Where fortunes disagree ;
 I know the high'st contents
 From low beginnings be.
 My love's unfeign'd,
 To her that deign'd
 From greatness stoop thereto.
 She loves, 'cause I,
 So mean, dared try
 Her better worth to woo.

And yet although much joy
 My fortune seem'd to bless ;
 'Tis mix'd with more annoy
 Than I shall e'er express :
 For with much pain
 Did I obtain

The gem I'll ne'er forego :
 Which, yet I dare
 Not shew, nor wear,
 And that breeds all my woe.

But fye, my foolish tongue,
 How loosely now it goes!
 First, let my knell be rung,
 Ere I do more disclose.
 Mount, thoughts, on high;
 Cease, words, for why;
 My meaning to divine:
 To those I leave,
 That can conceive
 So brave a love as mine.

And now no more I'll sing
 Among my fellow swains;
 Nor groves nor hills shall ring
 With echoes of my plaints.
 My measures be
 Confused (you see)
 And will not suit thereto;
 'Cause I have more
 Brave thoughts in store
 Than words can reach unto.

SONNET II.

HENCE away, you Syrens, leave me,
 And unclasp your wanton arms;
 Sugar'd words shall ne'er deceive me,
 (Though thou prove a thousand charms.

Fye, fye, forbear,
 No common snare
 Could ever my affection chain:
 Your painted baits,
 And poor deceits,
 Are all bestow'd on me in vain.

I'm no slave to such as you be;
 Neither shall a snowy breast,
 Wanton eye, or lip of ruby,
 Ever rob me of my rest.
 Go, go, display
 Your beauty's ray
 To some o'er-soon enamour'd swain.
 Those common wiles,
 Of sighs and smiles,
 Are all bestow'd on me in vain.

I have elsewhere vow'd a duty;
 Turn away thy tempting eyes;
 Shew not me a naked beauty;
 Those impostors I despise.
 My spirit loaths,
 Where gaudy cloaths,

And feigned oaths may love obtain,
 I love her so,
 Whose look swears No ;
 That all your labours will be vain.

Can he prize the tainted posies
 Which on every breast are worn,
 That may pluck the spotless roses
 From their never-touched thorn?
 I can go rest
 On her sweet breast ;
 That is the pride of Cynthia's train.
 Then hold your tongues,
 Your Mermaid songs
 Are all bestow'd on me in vain.

He's a fool, that basely dallies,
 Where each peasant mates with him.
 Shall I haunt the thronged vallies,
 Whilst there's noble hills to climb?
 No, no, though clowns
 Are scared with frowns,
 I know the best can but disdain :
 And those I'll prove ;
 So shall your love
 Be all bestow'd on me in vain.

Yet, I would not deign embraces
 With the greatest, fairest she,
 If another shared those graces,
 Which had been bestow'd on me.
 I gave that one
 My love, where none

Shall come to rob me of my gain.
 Your fickle hearts
 Makes tears, and arts,
 And all, bestow'd on me in vain.

I do scorn to vow a duty
 Where each lustful lad may woo.
 Give me her, whose sun-like beauty,
 Buzzards dare not soar unto.
 She, she it is,
 Affords that bliss,
 For which I would refuse no pain.
 But such as you,
 Fond fools, adieu;
 You seek to captive me in vain.

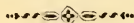
Proud she seem'd in the beginning,
 And disdain'd my looking on:
 But, that coy one in the winning,
 Proves a true one being won.
 Whate'er betide,
 She'll ne'er divide
 The favour she to me shall deign.
 But your fond love
 Will fickle prove,
 And all that trust in you are vain.

Therefore know, when I enjoy one,
 (And for love employ my breath)
 She I court shall be a coy one,
 Though I win her with my death.
 A favour there
 Few aim at dare.

And if, perhaps, some lover plain,
 She is not won,
 Nor I undone,
 By placing of my love in vain.

Leave me then, you Syrens, leave me ;
 Seek no more to work my harms :
 Crafty wiles cannot deceive me,
 Who am proof against your charms.

You labour may,
 To lead astray,
 • The heart that constant shall remain:
 And I the while,
 Will sit and smile,
 To see you spend your time in vain.



SONNET III.

WHEN Philomela with her strains
 The Spring had welcom'd in ;
 And Flora to bestrew the plains
 With daisies did begin :
 My love and I (on whom suspicious eyes
 Had set a thousand spies)
 To cozen Argos strove ;
 And seen of none,
 We got alone
 Into a shady grove.

On every bush the eglantine,
 With leaves perfumed, hung ;
 The primrose made the hedge-rows fine,
 The woods of music rung.

The earth, the air, and all things did conspire
 To raise contentment higher :
 That had I come to woo;
 Nor means of grace,
 Nor time, nor place,
 Were wanting thereunto.

With hand in hand alone we walk'd,
 And oft each other eyed :
 Of love and passions past we talk'd,
 Which our poor hearts had tried.
 Our souls infus'd into each other were :
 And, what may be her care,
 Did my more sorrow breed.
 One mind we bore ;
 One faith we swore :
 And both in one agreed.

Her dainty palm I gently prest,
 And with her lips I play'd.
 My cheek upon her panting breast,
 And on her neck I laid.
 And yet we had no sense of wanton lust;
 Nor did we then mistrust
 The poison in the sweet.
 Our bodies wrought
 So close, we thought,
 Because our souls should meet,

With pleasant toil we breathless grew ;
 And kiss'd in warmer blood :
 Upon her lips, the honey-dew,
 Like drops on roses stood ;

And on those flowers play'd I the busy bee ;
 Whose sweets were such to me,
 Them could I not forego.
 No, not to feast
 On Venus' breast,
 Whence streams of sweetness flow.

But kissing and embracing we
 So long together lay ;
 Her touches all inflamed me,
 And I began to stray.
 My hands presumed so far, they were too bold.
 My tongue unwisely told
 How much my heart was changed.
 And Virtue quite
 Was put to flight,
 Or for the time estranged.

Oh! what are we if, in our strength,
 We over boldly trust?
 The strongest forts will yield at length,
 And so our Virtues must.
 In me no force of reason had prevail'd,
 If she had also fail'd.
 But ere I further stray'd,
 She sighing kist
 My naked wrist,
 And thus in tears she said :

Sweetheart (quoth she) if in thy breast
 Those virtues real be,
 Which hitherto thou hast profest,
 And I believed in thee :

Thyself and me, oh seek not to abuse :
 Whilst thee I thus refuse,
 In hotter flames I fry:
 Yet let us not
 Our true love spot,
 Oh, rather let me die.

For, if thy heart should fall from good,
 What would become of mine?
 As strong a passion stirs my blood,
 As can distemper thine.
 Yet, in my breast this rage I smother would,
 Though it consume me should;
 And my desires contain:
 For, where we see
 Such breaches be,
 They seldom stop again.

Are we the two that have so long
 Each other's loves embraced?
 And never did affection wrong,
 Nor think a thought unchaste?
 And shall, oh shall we now, our matchless joy
 For one poor touch destroy?
 And all content forego?
 Oh no, my dear,
 Sweetheart, forbear;
 I will not lose thee so.

For, should we do a deed so base,
 (As it can never be)
 I could no more have seen thy face,
 Nor would'st thou look on me.

I should of all our passions grow ashamed;
 And blush when thou art named,
 Yea (though thou constant wert)
 I being nought,
 A jealous thought
 Would still torment my heart.

What goodly thing do we obtain
 If I consent to thee?
 Rare joys we lose, and what we gain,
 But common pleasures be:
 Yea, those (some say) who are to lust inclined,
 Drive love out of the mind;
 And so much reason miss,
 That they admire,
 What kind of fire
 A chaste affection is.

No vulgar bliss, I aimed at,
 When first I heard thee woo:
 I'll never prize a man for that,
 Which every groom can do.
 If that be love; the basest men that be,
 Do love as well as we.
 Who, if we bear us well,
 Do pass them then,
 As Angels men
 In glory do excel.

Whilst thus she spake, a cruel band
 Of passions seized my soul:
 And, what one seemed to command,
 Another did controul.

'Twixt good and ill I did divided lie.
 But, as I rais'd mine eye,
 In her methought I saw
 Those virtues shine,
 Whose rays divine
 First gave Desire a law.

With that I felt the blush of shame
 Into my cheek return;
 And Love did with a chaster flame
 Within my bosom burn.
 My soul her light of reason had renew'd;
 And by those beams I view'd
 How slyly Lust ensnares:
 And all the fires
 Of ill desires
 I quenched with my tears.

Go wantons, now, and flout at this
 My coldness, if you list;
 Vain fools, you never knew the bliss,
 That doth in love consist.
 You sigh, and weep, and labour to enjoy,
 A shade, a dream, a toy.
 Poor folly you pursue,
 And are unblest,
 Since every beast
 In pleasure equals you.

You never took so rich content
 In all your wanton play,
 As this to me hath pleasure lent,
 That chaste she went away.

For as some sins, which we committed have,
 Sharp stings behind them leave,
 Whereby we vexed are ;
 So, ill supprest,
 Begetteth rest,
 And peace without compare.

But lest this conquest slight you make
 Which on myself I won,
 Twelve labours I will undertake
 With Jove's victorious son,
 Ere I will such another brunt endure.
 For, had Diana pure
 Thus tempted been to sin,
 The Queen of Night,
 With her chaste light,
 Had scarce a maiden been.



OH! how honour'd are my Songs,
 Grac'd by your melodious tongues;
 And how pleasing do they seem
 Now your voices carol them!
 Were not yet that task to do,
 Which my word enjoins me to,
 I should beg of you to hear
 What your own inventions were.

But, (before I aught will crave)
 What I promis'd you shall have.
 And, as I on mortal creatures
 Call'd, to view her body's features,
 Shewing how to make the senses
 Apprehend her excellencies,
 Now, I speak of no worse subject
 Than a soul's and reason's object:
 (And relate a Beauty's glories,
 Fitting heavenly auditories.)
 Therefore whilst I sit and sing,
 Hem me, Angels, in a ring.
 Come, ye Spirits which have eyes
 That can gaze on Deities,
 And, unclogg'd with brutish senses,
 Comprehend such excellencies!
 Or, if any mortal ear
 Would be granted leave to hear,
 (And find profit with delight
 In what now I shall indite)
 Let him first be sure to season
 A prepared heart with reason;
 And, with judgment, drawing nigh,
 Lay all fond affections by.

So, through all her veilings, he
Shall the soul of beauty see.

But, avoid you earth-bred wights,
Cloy'd with sensual appetites.
On base objects glut your eyes, .
Till your starveling pleasure dies.
Feed your ears with such delights
As may match your gross conceits;
For, within your muddy brain,
These you never can contain.

Think not you, who by the sense
Only judge of excellence,
(Or do all contentment place
In the beauty of a face)
That these higher thoughts of our
Soar so base a pitch as your.
I can give, as well as you,
Outward beauties all their due:
I can most contentments see,
That in love or women be.

Though I doat not on the features
Of our daintiest female creatures;
(Nor was e'er so void of shames,
As to play their lawless games)
I more prize a snowy hand
Than the gold on 'Tagus' strand,
And a dainty lip before
All the greatest monarch's store.
Yea, from these I reap as true,
And as large contents as you.

Yet to them am I not tied:
I have rarer sweets espied
(Wider prospects of true pleasure)
Than your curbed thoughts can measure.

In her soul my soul descries
 Objects that may feed her eyes;
 And the beauty of her mind
 Shews my reason where to find
 All my former pleasure doubled;
 Neither with such passion troubled,
 As wherewith it oft was crost;
 Nor so easy to be lost.

I, that ravish'd lay well nigh
 By the lustre of her eye,
 And had almost sworn affection
 To the 'fore express'd perfection,
 As if nothing had been higher
 Whereunto I might aspire,
 Now have found, by seeking nearer,
 Inward worth, that shining clearer,
 (By a sweet and secret moving)
 Draws me to a dearer loving.
 And, whilst I that love conceive,
 Such impressions it doth leave
 In the intellective part,
 As defaces from my heart
 Every thought of those delights,
 Which allure base appetites;
 And my mind so much employs,
 In contemplating those joys
 Which a purer sight doth find
 In the beauty of her mind,
 That I so thereon am set,
 As (methinks) I could forget
 All her sweetest outward graces,
 Though I lay in her embraces.

But, some thinking with a smile
 What they would have done the while,

Now suppose my words are such,
 As exceed my power too much.
 For, all those our wantons hold,
 Void of vigour, dull, and cold:
 Or (at best) but fools, whose flame
 Makes not way unto their shame.
 Though at length with grief they see,
 They the fools do prove to be.

These, the body so much minded
 That their reason over-blinded
 By the pleasures of the sense,
 Hides from them that excellence,
 And that sweetness, whose true worth,
 I am here to blazon forth.

'Tis not, 'tis not, those rare graces,
 That do lurk in women's faces;
 'Tis not a display'd perfection,
 Youthful eyes, nor clear complexion;
 Nor a skin smooth-satin like,
 Nor a dainty rosy cheek,
 That to wantonness can move,
 Such as virtuously do love.
 Beauty rather gently draws
 Wild desires to reason's laws;
 And oft frights men from that sin,
 They had else transgressed in:
 Through a sweet amazement struck,
 From an over-ruling look.
 Beauty never tempteth men
 To lasciviousness, but when
 Careless idleness hath brought
 Wicked longings into thought.
 Nor doth youth, or heat of blood,
 Make men prove what is not good.

Nor the strength of which they vaunt,
 'Tis the strength and power they want,
 And the baseness of the mind,
 Makes their brute desires inclin'd
 To pursue those vain delights
 Which affect their appetites.
 And so blinded do they grow
 (Who are overtaken so)
 As their dulness cannot see,
 Nor believe that better be.
 Some have blood as hot as their,
 Whose affections loosest are ;
 Bodies that require no art
 To supply weak Nature's part.
 Youth they have, and sure might too
 Boast of what some shameless do ;
 Yet, their minds that aim more high
 Than those baser pleasures lie,
 Taught by virtue, can suppress
 All attempts of wantonness.
 And such powerful motives frame
 To extinguish passion's flame,
 That (by reason's good direction)
 Qualifying loose affection,
 They'll in midst of Beauty's fires
 Walk unscorch'd of all desires.

Yet, no such as stupid shame
 Keeps from actions worthy blame,
 But, in all so truly man,
 That their apprehensions can
 Prize the body's utmost worth,
 And find many pleasures forth
 In those Beauties, more than you,
 That abuse them, ever knew.

But, perhaps, her outward grace
 Here describ'd, hath ta'en such place
 In some o'er-enamour'd breast,
 And so much his heart possest,
 As he thinks it passeth telling,
 How she may be more excelling:
 Or what worth I can prefer
 To be more admir'd in her.
 Therefore, now I will be brief,
 To prevent that misbelief.
 And, if there be present here
 Any one whose nicer ear
 Tasks my measures as offending,
 In too seriously commending
 What affects the sense, or may
 Injure virtue any way,
 Let them know, 'tis understood,
 That if they were truly good,
 It could never breed offence,
 That I shew'd the excellence,
 With the power of God and Nature,
 In the beauty of his creature.
 They from thence would rather raise
 Cause to meditate his praise:
 And thus think, How fair must He
 That hath made the fair one be!

That, was my proposed end.
 And, to make them more attend
 Unto this; so much excelling,
 As it passeth means of telling.

But at worst; if any strain
 Makes your memories retain
 Sparks of such a baneful fire,
 As may kindle ill desire,

This, that follows after, shall
 Not alone extinguish all ;
 But, even make you blush with shame,
 That your thoughts were so to blame.
 Yet, I know when I have done,
 (In respect of that bright sun,
 Whose inestimable light
 I would blazon to your sight)
 These ensuing flashes are,
 As to Cynthia's beams, a star ;
 Or, a petty comet's ray,
 To the glorious eye of day.
 For, what power of words or art
 Can her worth at full impart?
 Or, what is there, may be found
 Plac'd within the senses' bound,
 That can paint those sweets to me
 Which the eyes of Love do see?
 Or the beauties of that mind,
 Which her body hath enshrin'd.

Can I think the Guide of Heaven
 Hath so bountifully given
 Outward features, 'cause he meant
 To have made less excellent
 Her divine part? Or suppose
 Beauty goodness doth oppose ;
 Like those fools, who do despair,
 To find any good and fair?
 Rather, there I seek a mind
 Most excelling, where I find
 God hath to the body lent
 Most beseeming ornament.
 But, though he that did inspire
 First the true Promethean fire,

In each several soul did place
 Equal excellence and grace,
 As some think ; yet have not they
 Equal beauties every way.
 For, they more or less appear,
 As the outward organs are,
 Following much the temp'ature
 Of the body, gross or pure.
 And I do believe it true,
 That as we the body view,
 Nearer to perfection grow,
 So the soul herself doth show :
 Others more and more excelling
 In her power, as in her dwelling.
 For, that pureness giveth way,
 Better to disclose each ray
 To the dull conceit of man,
 Than a grosser substance can.
 Thus, through spotless crystal, we
 We may the day's full glory see ;
 When, if clearest sunbeams pass
 Through a foul polluted glass ;
 So discolour'd they'll appear,
 As those stains they shone through were.

Let no critic cavil then,
 If I dare affirm again,
 That her mind's perfections are
 Fairer than her body's fair ;
 And, I need not prove it by
 Axioms of philosophy,
 Since no proof can better be
 Than their rare effect in me.
 For while other men, complaining,
 Tell their mistresses' disdain,

Free from care, I write a story,
Only of her worth and glory.

While most lovers pining sit
(Robb'd of liberty and wit)
Vassalling themselves with shame
To some proud imperious dame;
Or, in songs their fate bewailing,
Shew the world their faithless failing;
I, enwreath'd with boughs of myrtle,
Fare like the beloved turtle.

Yea, while most are most untoward,
Peevish, vain, inconstant, froward;
While their best contentments bring
Nought but after sorrowing;
She, those childish humours slighting,
Hath conditions so delighting,
And doth so my bliss endeavour,
As my joy increaseth ever.

By her actions I can see
That her passions so agree
Unto reason; as they err
Seldom to distemper her.

Love she can (and doth), but so
As she will not overthrow
Love's content by any folly,
Or by deeds that are unholy.
Dotingly, she ne'er affects;
Neither willingly neglects
Honest love: but means doth find
With discretion to be kind.
'Tis nor thund'ring phrase, nor oaths,
Honours, wealth, nor painted clothes,
That can her good liking gain,
If no other worth remain.

Never took her heart delight
 In your court-hermaphrodite,
 Or such frothy gallants as
 For the times heroës pass.
 Such, who (still in love) do all
 Fair, and sweet, and lady call.
 And where'er they hap to stray,
 Either prate the rest away,
 Or, of all discourse to seek,
 Shuffle in at *cent* or *gleek*.

Goodness more delights her than
 All their mask of folly can.
 Fond she hateth to appear,
 Though she hold a friend as dear
 As her part of life unspent,
 Or the best of her content.

If the heat of youthful fires
 Warm her blood with those desires,
 Which are, by the course of nature,
 Stirr'd in ev'ry perfect creature,
 As those passions kindle, so
 Does heaven's grace, and reason grow
 Abler to suppress in her
 Those rebellions; and they stir
 Never more affection, than
 One good thought allays again.

I could say, so chaste is she,
 As the new-blown roses be,
 Or the drifts of snow, that none
 Ever touch'd, or look'd upon.
 But that were not worth a fly,
 Seeing so much chastity
 Old Pigmalion's Picture had :
 Yea, those eunuchs born or made

Ne'er to know desire, might say,
 She deserv'd no more than they.
 Whereas, whilst their worth proceeds
 From such wants, as they must needs
 Be unmov'd ('cause nature framed
 No affections to be tamed)
 Through her dainty limbs are spread
 Vigour, heat, and freely shed
 Life-blood into every vein,
 Till they fill and swell again :
 And no doubt they strive to force
 Way in some forbidden course ;
 Which, by grace she still resists ;
 And so curbs within their lists
 Those desires, that she is chaster
 Than if she had none to master.

Malice never lets she in ;
 Neither hates she ought but sin.
 Envy if she could admit,
 There's no means to nourish it ;
 For, her gentle heart is pleased
 When she knows another's eased.
 And there's none who ever got
 That perfection she hath not.
 So that no cause is there why
 She should any one envy.

Mildly angry she'll appear, —
 That the baser rout may fear,
 Through presumption to misdo ;
 Yet she often fains that too.
 But let wrong be whatsoever,
 She gives way to choler never.

If she e'er of vengeance thought,
 'Twas nor life, nor blood was sought,

But (at most) some prayer to move
Justice for abused love:
Or, that fate would pay again
Love's neglecters with disdain.

If she ever craved of fate
To obtain a higher state,
(Or ambitiously were given)
'Sure, 'twas but to climb to heaven.
Pride is from her heart as far
As the poles in distance are.
For her worth, nor all this praise,
Can her humble spirit raise,
Less to prize me than before,
Or herself to value more.

Were she vain, she might allege,
'Twere her sex's privilege.
But she's such, as (doubtless) no man
Knows less folly in a woman.

To prevent a being idle,
Sometime with her curious needle,
(Though it be her meanest glory)
She so limns an antique story,
As Minerva (would she take it)
Might her richest sample make it.

Oth'er while again she rather
Labours with delight to gather
Knowledge from such learned writs,
As are left by famous wits;
Where she chiefly seeks to know
God, herself, and what we owe
To our neighbour: since with these
Come all needful knowledges.

She, with Adam, never will
Long to learn both good and ill;

But her state well understood,
Rests herself content with good.

Avarice abhorreth she,
As the loathsom'st things that be :
Since she knows it is an ill,
That doth ripest virtue kill.
And where'er it comes to rest,
(Though in some strict matron's breast,
Be she ne'er so seeming just,
I'll no shows of goodness trust.
For, if you but gold can bring,
Such are hired to any thing.

If you think she jealous be,
You are wide: for, credit me,
Her strong'st jealousies nought are,
Other than an honest care
Of her friends. And, most can tell,
Who so wants that, loves not well.

Though some little fear she shows,
'Tis no more than love allows :
So the passion do not move her,
Till she grieve or wrong her lover.
She may think he may do ill,
Though she'll not believe he will.
Nor, can such a harmless thought,
Blemish true affection aught :
Rather, when as else it would
Through security grow cold.
This her passion keeping measure,
Strengthens love and sweetens pleasure.

Cruelty her soul detests,
For within her bosom rests
Noblest Pity, usher'd by
An unequall'd Courtesy.

And is grieved at good men's moan,
As the grief were all her own.

Just she is, so just, that I
Know she would not wrong a fly,
Or oppress the meanest thing,
To be mistress to a king.

If our painters would include
Temperance and fortitude
In one picture, she would fit
For the nonce to pattern it.
Patient as the lamb is she,
Harmless as the turtles be,
Yea, so largely stor'd with all
Which we mortals goodness call,
That, if ever Virtue were,
Or may be, incarnate here,
This is she, whose praises I
Offer to eternity.

She's no image trimm'd about,
Fair within and foul without,
But a gem that doth appear
Like the diamond, every where
Sparkling rays of beauty forth;
All of such unblemish'd worth,
That were 't possible your eye
Might her inmost thoughts espy,
And behold the dimmest part
Of the lustre in her heart,
It would find that center pass,
What the superficies was;
And, that every angle there
Like a diamond's inside were.

For, although that excellence
Pass the piercing'st eye of sense;

By their operations we
 Guess at things that hidden be.
 So (beyond our common reach)
 Wise men can by reason teach,
 What the influences been
 Of a planet when unseen;
 Or the beauty of a star,
 That doth shine above us far.
 So, by that wide-beaming light,
 Wherewith Titan courts our sight,
 By his clothing of the earth;
 By the wondrous, various birth
 Of new creatures yearly bred
 Through his heat, and nourished :
 And by many virtues mo
 (Which our senses reach unto)
 We conclude, they are not all,
 Which make fair that goodly Ball.

Though she prize her honour more
 Than the far-fetch'd precious store
 Of the rich Molucci, or
 All the wealth was traffick'd for,
 Since our vessels passage knew
 Unto Mexico, Peru ;
 Or those spacious kingdoms, which
 Make the proud Iberians rich :
 'Tis not that uncertain blast
 Keeps my Mistress good or chaste.
 She, that but for honour's sake,
 Doth of ill a conscience make ;
 (More in fear what rumour says
 Than in love to virtuous ways)
 Though she seem'd more civil than
 You have seen a courtezan

For an honour; and cries oh fy,
 At each shew of vanity :
 Though she censure all that be
 Not so foolish coy as she :
 Though she with the Roman Dame
 Kill herself to purchase fame :
 She would prostitute become
 To the meanest, basest groom ;
 If so closely they may do it,
 As the world shall never know it.
 So at best those women prove,
 That for honour, virtue love.
 Give me her that goodness chooseth
 For its own sake: and refuseth
 To have greatest honours gain'd
 With her secret conscience stain'd.
 Give me her that would be poor,
 Die disgrac'd, nay, thought a whore ;
 And each time's reproach become,
 Till the general day of doom ;
 Rather than consent to act
 Pleasiug sin, though by the fact,
 (With esteem of virtuous) she
 Might the German Empress be.
 Such my Mistress is ; and nought
 Shall have power to change her thought.
 Pleasures cannot tempt her eye
 On their baits to glance awry.
 For their good she still esteems,
 As it is, not as it seems :
 And, she takes no comfort in
 Sweetest pleasure, sour'd with sin.
 By herself she hath such care,
 That her actions decent are.

For, were she in secret hid,
 None might see her what she did.
 She would do, as if for spies,
 Every wall were stuck with eyes.
 And be cheery of her honour,
 'Cause the heavens do look upon her.
 And, oh what had power to move,
 Flames of lust, or wauton love,
 So far to disparage us,
 If we all were minded thus?
 These are beauties that shall last
 When the crimson blood shall waste,
 And the shining hair wax grey,
 Or with age be worn away.
 These yield pleasures, such as might
 Be remember'd with delight,
 When we gasp our latest breath
 On the loathed bed of death.

Though discreetly speak she can,
 She'll be silent rather than
 Talk while others may be heard.
 As if she did hate, or fear'd
 Their condition, who will force
 All to wait on their discourse.
 Reason hath on her bestowed
 More of knowledge than she owed
 To that sex : and Grace with it
 Doth aright her practice fit.

Yet, hath Fate so framed her,
 As she may at some time err :
 But, if e'er her judgment stray,
 'Tis that other women may
 Those much-pleasing beauties see,
 Which in yielding Natures be.

For, since no perfection can
 Here on earth be found in man,
 There's more good in free submissions,
 Than there's ill in our transgressions.
 Should you hear her once contend
 In discoursing to defend
 (As she can) a doubtful cause,
 She such strong positions draws
 From known truths, and doth apply
 Reasons with such majesty,
 As if she did undertake
 From some oracle to speak;
 And you could not think what might
 Breed more love or more delight.

Yet, if you should mark again
 Her discreet behaviour, when
 She finds reason to repent
 Some wrong-pleaded argument;
 She so temperately lets all
 Her misheld opinions fall;
 And, can with such mildness bow,
 As 'twill more enamour you
 Than her knowledge. For, there are
 Pleasing sweets without compare
 In such yieldings; which do prove
 Wit, humility, and love.
 Yea, by those mistakings, you
 Her condition so shall know,
 (And the nature of her mind
 So undoubtedly shall find)
 As will make her more endear'd
 Than if she had never err'd.

Farther, that she nought may miss
 Which worth praise in woman is,

This unto the rest I add :
 If I wound, or sickness had,
 None should for my curing run,
 (No not to Apollo's son)
 She, so well, the virtue knows
 Of each needful herb that grows ;
 And so fitly can apply
 Salves to every malady ;
 That, if she no succour gave me,
 'Twere no means of art could save me.

Should my soul oppressed lie,
 (Sunk with grief and sorrow nigh)
 She hath balm for minds distrest,
 And could ease my pained breast ;
 She so well knows how to season
 Passionate discourse with reason ;
 And knows how to sweeten it
 Both with so much love and wit,
 That it shall prepare the sense
 To give way with less offence.
 For, grieved minds can ill abide,
 Counsel churlishly applied :
 Which, instead of comfortings,
 Desperation often brings.

But hark, Nymphs : methinks I hear
 Music sounding in mine ear.
 'Tis a lute ; and he's the best
 For a voice, in all the west,
 That doth touch it. And the Swain
 I would have you hear so fain,
 That my song forbear will I,
 To attend his melody.

Hither comes he, day by day,
 In these groves to sing and play,

And in yon close arbour he
Sitteth now expecting me.
He so bashful is, that mute
Will his tongue be, and his lute,
Should he happen to espy
This unlook'd for company.

If you therefore list to hear him,
Let's with silence walk more near him.
'Twill be worth your pains (believe me)
(If a voice content may give ye)
And await you shall not long,
For he now begins a song.



SONNET I.

WHAT is the cause, when elsewhere I resort,
 I have my gestures and discourse more free?
 (And if I please) can any beauty court,
 Yet stand so dull, and so demure by thee?
 Why are my speeches broken whilst I talk?
 Why do I fear almost thy hand to touch?
 Why dare I not embrace thee as I walk,
 Since with the greatest nymphs I've dared as much?
 Ah! know that none of those I e'er affected,
 And therefore used a careless courtship there:
 Because I neither their disdain respected,
 Nor reckon'd them or their embraces dear.
 But, loving thee, my love hath found content;
 And rich delights, in things indifferent.



SONNET II.

WHY covet I thy blessed eyes to see,
 Whose sweet aspect may cheer the saddest mind?
 Why, when our bodies must divided be,
 Can I no hour of rest or pleasure find?
 Why do I sleeping start, and waking moan,
 To find that of my dreamed hopes I miss?

Why do I often contemplate alone
 Of such a thing as thy perfection is?
 And wherefore when we meet doth Passion stop
 My speechless tongue, and leave me in a panting?
 Why doth my heart, o'ercharged with fear and hope,
 (In spite of reason) almost droop to fainting?
 Because in me thy excellencies moving,
 Have drawn me to an excellence in loving.



SONNET III.

FAIR, since thy virtues my affections move,
 And I have vow'd my purpose is to join
 (In an eternal band of chastest love)
 Our souls, to make a marriage most divine,
 Why (thou may'st think) then, seemeth he to prize
 An outward Beauty's fading hue so much?
 Why doth he read such lectures in mine eyes,
 And often strive my tender palm to touch?
 Oh pardon my presuming: for I swear,
 My love is soiled with no lustful spot:
 Thy soul's perfections through those veils appear,
 And I half faint that I embrace them not.
 No foul desires doth make thy touches sweet:
 But my soul striveth with thy soul to meet.

SONNET IV.

SHALL I wasting in despair
 Die, because a woman's fair?
 Or make pale my cheeks with care,
 'Cause another's rosy are?
 Be she fairer than the Day,
 Or the flowery meads in May;
 If she be not so to me,
 What care I how fair she be!

Should my heart be grieved or pined
 'Cause I see a woman kind?
 Or a well-disposed nature
 Joined with a lovely feature?
 Be she meeker, kinder, than
 Turtle-dove or pelican:
 If she be not so to me,
 What care I how kind she be!

Shall a woman's virtues move
 Me to perish for her love?
 Or, her well-deserving known,
 Make me quite forget mine own?
 Be she with that goodness blest,
 Which may gain her name, of best:
 If she be not such to me,
 What care I how good she be!

'Cause her fortune seems too high,
 Shall I play the fool and die?

Those that bear a noble mind,
 Where they want of riches find,
 Think what with them they would do,
 That without them dare to woo:
 And unless that mind I see,
 What care I, though great she be!

Great, or good, or kind, or fair,
 I will ne'er the more despair:
 If she love me, this believe,
 I will die ere she shall grieve,
 If she slight me when I woo,
 I can scorn and let her go;
 For, if she be not for me,
 What care I for whom she be!



SONNET V.

I WANDER'D out awhile agone,
 And went I know not whither:
 But there do Beauties many a one
 Resort and meet together.
 And Cupid's power will there be shown,
 If ever you come thither.

For, like two suns, two Beauties bright
 I shining saw together,
 And, tempted by their double light,
 My eyes I fix'd on either:
 Till both at once so thrall'd my sight,
 I loved, and knew not whether.

Such equal * sweet Venus gave,
 That I preferr'd not either ;
 And when for love I thought to crave,
 I knew not well of whether :
 For one while this I wish'd to have,
 And then I that had liefer.

A lover of the curious't eye,
 Might have been pleased in either :
 And so, I must confess, might I,
 Had they not been together.
 Now both must love, or both deny ;
 In one enjoy I neither.

But yet at last I 'scap'd the smart
 I fear'd at coming hither :
 For, seeing my divided heart,
 I choosing knew not whether.
 Love angry grew, and did depart,
 And now I care for neither.

* A word seems here to be wanting :—*Query*, charms.

SEE, these trees so ill did hide us,
 That the Shepherd hath espied us :
 And (as jealous of his cunning)
 All in haste away is running.
 To entreat him back again
 Would be labour spent in vain.
 You may therefore now betake ye
 To the music I can make ye ;
 Who do purpose my invention
 Shall pursue my first intention.

For, in Her whose worth I tell,
 Many excellencies dwell
 Yet unmention'd : whose perfections
 Worthy are of best affections.

That which is so rare to find,
 Both in man and womankind ;
 That, whose absence Love defaceth,
 And both sexes more disgraceth,
 Than the spite of furrow'd age,
 Sickneses, or sorrow's rage ;
 That's the jewel so divine
 Which doth on her forehead shine,
 And therewith endowed is she
 In an excellent degree :
 Constancy I mean, the purest
 Of all beauties ; and the surest,
 For, who'er doth that possess,
 Hath an endless loveliness.

All afflictions, labours, crosses,
 All our dangers, wounds, and losses,
 Games of pleasure we can make,
 For that matchless Woman's sake,

In whose breast that virtue bideth :
 And we joy whate'er betideth.

Most dejected hearts it gladdeth :
 Twenty thousand glories addeth
 Unto Beauty's brightest ray ;
 And preserves it from decay.
 'Tis the salt, that's made to season
 Beauty, for the use of reason.
 'Tis the varnish and the oiling,
 Keeps her colours fresh from spoiling.
 'Tis an excellence whereby
 Age, though join'd with poverty,
 Hath more dear affection won,
 Than fresh youth and wealth have done.
 'Tis a loveliness endearing
 Beauties, scarce worth note appearing ;
 Whilst a fairer fickle dame
 Nothing gains but scorn and shame.

Further, 'tis a Beauty, such
 As I can nor praise too much,
 Nor frame measures to express ;
 No, nor any man, unless
 He who (more than all men crost)
 Finds it in that woman lost,
 On whose faith he would have pawn'd
 Life, and all he could command.
 Such a man may by that miss
 Make us know how dear it is ;
 When, o'ercharg'd with grief, he shall
 Sigh and break his heart withal.

This is that perfection, which
 In her favour makes me rich ;
 All whose beauties (named before)
 Else would but torment me more :

And, in having this, I find
 (Whate'er haps) a quiet mind.
 Yea, 'tis that which I do prize
 Far above her lips, her eyes,
 Or that general beauty, whence
 Shines each several excellence.

For, alas! what gain'd hath he,
 Who may clip the fairest She
 That the name of woman bears,
 If, unhappily, he fears
 Any other's worth may win
 What he thought his own had been?
 Him base-minded deem I should,
 Who (although he were in hold
 Wrapt in chains) would not disdain
 Love with her to entertain,
 That both daughter to a peer,
 And most rich and lovely were,
 When a brainless gull shall dare
 In her favours with him share :
 Or the action of a player
 Rob him of a hope so fair.

This I dread not ; for, I know
 Strained gestures, painted show,
 Shameless boastings, borrowed jests,
 Female looks, gay-plumed crests,
 Vows nor protestations vain,
 (Wherewith fools are made so vain)
 Move her can ; save to contemn,
 Or, perhaps, to laugh at them.

Neither can I doubt or fear
 Time shall either change or wear
 This her virtue ; or impair
 That which makes her soul so fair.

In which trust great comforts are,
Which the fear of loss would mar.

Nor hath this my rare hope stood
So much in her being good,
(With her love to blessed things)
As in her acknowledgings
From a higher Power to have them ;
And her love to Him that gave them.
For, although tó have a mind
Naturally to good inclined,
And to love it, would assure
Reason that it might endure ;
Yet (since man was first unjust)
There's no warrant for such trust :
Virtues, that most wonder win,
Would converted be to sin,
If their flourishings began
From no better root than man.
Our best virtues, when they are
Of themselves, we may compare
To the beauty of a flower
That is blasted in an hour,
And which, growing to be fuller,
Turns into some loathed colour.
But those, being freely given,
And confirm'd in us from heaven,
Have a promise on them past,
And for evermore shall last ;
Diamond-like, their lustre clearing
More and more by use and wearing.

But if this rare worth I praise,
Should, by Fate's permission, raise
Passions in some gentle breast,
That distemper may his rest ;

And be author of such treason
 As might nigh endanger reason;
 Or enforce his tongue to crave
 What another man must have:
 Mark, in such a strait as this,
 How discreet her dealing is!
 She is nothing of their humours,
 Who their honour build on rumours,
 And had rather private sporting,
 Than allow of open courting:
 Nor of theirs, that would seem holy
 By divulging others folly.
 Farther is she from their guise
 That delight to tyrannize,
 Or make boastings in espying
 Others for their favours dying.

She a spirit doth possess
 So replete with nobleness,
 That, if she be there beloved
 Where she ought not to be moved
 Equally to love again,
 She doth so well entertain
 That affection, as there's none
 Can suppose it ill bestown.

From deluding she is free ;
 From disdain as far is she ;
 And so feelingly bears part
 Of what pains another's heart,
 That no curse of scorned duty
 Shall draw vengeance on her beauty.
 Rather, with so tender fear
 Of her honour, and their care,
 She is touch'd, that neither shall,
 Wrong unto herself, befall

By the favour she doth show ;
 Nor will she neglect them so,
 As may just occasion give
 Any way to make them grieve.

Hope, she will not let them see,
 Lest they should presuming be,
 And aspire to that which none
 Ever must enjoy but one.
 From despair she keeps them too,
 Fearing they might hap to do,
 Either through love's indiscretions,
 Or much over-stirred passions,
 What might with their hurt and shame
 Into question call her name,
 And a scandal on her bring,
 Who is just in every thing.
 She hath mark'd how others run,
 And by them hath learn'd to shun
 Both their fault, who, otherwise,
 Err by being too precise;
 And their folly, that, o'erkind,
 Are to all complaints inclined :
 For, her wit hath found the way
 How awhile to hold them play,
 And that inconvenience shun,
 Whereinto both seem to run ;
 By allowing them a scope
 Just betwixt despair and hope,
 Where confined, and reaching neither,
 They do take a part in either :
 Till, long living in suspense,
 (Tired by her indifference)
 Time, at last, their passion wears ;
 Passions wearing, reason clears ;

Reason gives their judgment light;
 Judgment bringeth all to right :
 So, their hope appearing vain,
 They become themselves again.
 And, with high applauses fit
 For such virtue, with such wit ;
 They that service only proffer,
 She may take, and they may offer.

Yet, this course she never proves,
 Save with those whose virtuous loves
 Use the noblest means of gaining
 Favours worthy the obtaining.
 And, if such should chance to err,
 Either 'gainst themselves or her,
 In some oversights, when they
 Are through passion led astray,
 She so well man's frailty knows
 With the darts that Beauty throws,
 As she will not, adding terror,
 Break the heart for one poor error.
 Rather (if still good they be)
 Twenty remedies hath she
 Gently to apply, where sense
 Hath invaded reason's fence ;
 And, without or wound or scar,
 Turns to peace a lawless war.

But, to those whose baser fires
 Breathe out smoke of such desires,
 As may dim with unpure streams
 Any part of Beauty's beams,
 She will deign no milder way
 Those foul burnings to allay,
 Save with such extreme neglect
 As shall work her wish'd effect.

And to use so sharp a cure
 She's not oft constrained, sure,
 'Cause upon her forehead still
 Goodness sits, so fear'd of Ill,
 That the scorn and high disdains,
 Wherewithal she entertains
 Those loath'd glances, giveth ending
 To such flamings in the tinding,
 That their cooled hopes needs must
 Freeze desires in heat of lust.

'Tis a power that never lies
 In the fair'st immodest eyes.
 Wantons, 'tis not your sweet eyeings,
 Forced passions, feigned dyings,
 Gestures, temptings, tears, beguilings,
 Dancings, singings, kissings, smilings;
 Nor those painted sweets, with which
 You unwary men bewitch!
 All united, nor asunder,
 That can compass such a wonder;
 Or to win you love prevails,
 Where her moving virtue fails.

Beauties, 'tis not all those features,
 Placed in the fairest creatures,
 Though their best they should discover,
 That can tempt from her a lover.
 'Tis not those soft snowy breasts,
 Where love rock'd in pleasure rests,
 And by their continual motions
 Draweth hearts to vain devotions;
 Nor the nectar that we sip
 From a honey-dropping lip!
 Nor those eyes, whence Beauty's lances
 Wound the heart with wanton glances;

Nor those sought delights that lie
 In love's hidden treasury :
 That can liking gain where she
 Will the best beloved be.

For, should those who think they may
 Draw my love from her away,
 Bring forth all their female graces,
 Wrap me in their close embraces ;
 Practise all the art they may,
 Weep, or sing, or kiss, or pray,
 And with sighs and looks come woo me,
 When they soonest may undo me ;
 One poor thought of her would arm me
 So, as Circe could not harm me.
 Since, beside those excellencies
 Wherewith others please the senses,
 She, whom I have prized so,
 Yields delights for reason too.
 Who could dote on thing so common
 As mere outward handsome woman?
 Those half-beauties only win
 Fools, to let affection in.
 Vulgar wits, from reason shaken,
 Are with such impostures taken :
 And, with all their art in love,
 Wantons can but wantons move.
 But, when unto those are join'd
 Those things which adorn the mind ;
 None their excellencies see,
 But they straight enthralled be.
 Fools, and wise men, worst and best,
 Subject are to Love's arrest.
 For, when Virtue woos a lover,
 She's an unresisted mover,

That will have no kind of nay,
And in love brooks no delay.

She can make the sensual wights
To restrain their appetites,
And, (her beauty when they see)
Spite of vice, in love to be :
Yea, although themselves be bad,
Praise the good they never had.
She hath to her service brought
Those that her have set at nought ;
And can fair enough appear
To inflame the most severe.

She hath oft allured out
The religiously devout
From their cloisters and their vows,
To embrace what she allows ;
And to such contentments come,
As blind zeal had barr'd them from ;
While (her laws misunderstood)
They did ill for love of good.

Where I find true worth to be,
Sweetest are their lips to me ;
And embraces tempt me to
More than outward beauties do.
That my firm belief is this :
If ever I do amiss ;
Seeming Good, the bait will lay,
That to ill shall me betray !
Since, where shows of Goodness are,
I am oft embolden'd there
Freedoms so permit and use,
Which I elsewhere do refuse :
For because I think they mean
To allow no deed unclean.

Yet where two love Virtue shall,
Both at once, they seldom fall ;
For, when one hath thoughts of ill,
T'other helps exile them still.

My fair virtue's power is this ;
And that power the Beauty is,
Which doth make her, here express'd,
Equally both fair and bless'd.

This was that contenting grace
Which affection made me place
With so dear respect, that never
Can it fail, but last for ever.

This, a servant made me sworn,
Who beforetime held in scorn
To yield vassalage or duty,
Though unto the Queen of Beauty.
Yet, that I her servant am,
It shall more be to my fame
Than to own these woods and downs,
Or be lord of fifty towns.
And my Mistress to be deem'd,
Shall more honour be esteem'd
Than those titles to acquire
Which most women most desire.
Yea, when you a woman shall
Countess or a duchess call,
That respect it shall not move,
Neither gain her half such love,
As to say, Lo, this is she
That supposed is to be
Mistress to PHIL'ARETE,
And that lovely Nymph which he
In a pastoral poem famed,
And FAIR VIRTUE there hath named.

Yea, some ladies (ten to one)
 If not many now unknown,
 Will be very well repaid,
 When by chance she hears it said,
 She that fair one is, whom I
 Here have praised concealedly.

And though now this age's pride
 May so brave a hope deride,
 Yet, when all their glories pass
 As the thing that never was,
 And on monuments appear
 That they e'er had breathing here
 Who envy it; She shall thrive
 In her fame, and honour'd live,
 Whilst Great Britain's shepherds sing
 English in their sonnetting.
 And whoe'er in future days
 Shall bestow the utmost praise
 On his love, that any man
 Attribute to creature can,
 'Twill be this; that he hath dared
 His and mine to have compared.

Oh! what stars did shine on me,
 When her eyes I first did see!
 And how good was their aspect,
 When we first did both affect!
 For, I never since to changing
 Was inclined, or thought of ranging.

Me so oft my Fancy drew
 Here and there, that I ne'er knew
 Where to place desire before,
 So that range it might no more;
 But as he that passeth by
 Where in all her jollity

Flora's riches in a row
 Doth in seemly order grow,
 And a thousand flowers stand
 Bending as to kiss his hand ;
 Out of which delightful store
 One he may take, and no more ;
 Long he, pausing, doubteth whether
 Of those fair ones he should gather.

First the primrose courts his eyes ;
 Then the cowslip he espies ;
 Next the pansy seems to woo him ;
 Then carnations bow unto him ;
 Which, whilst that enamour'd swain
 From the stalks intends to strain,
 As half fearing to be seen,
 Prettily her leaves between
 Peeps the violet ; pale, to see
 That her virtues slighted be.
 Which, so much his liking wins,
 That to seize her he begins.
 Yet, before he stoop'd so low,
 He his wanton eye did throw
 On a stem that grew more high,
 And the rose did there espy ;
 Who, beside her precious scent,
 To procure his eyes content
 Did display her goodly breast,
 Where he found at full exprest
 All the good that nature showers
 On a thousand other flowers.
 Wherewith he, affected, takes it ;
 His beloved flower he makes it,
 And, without desire of more,
 Walks through all he saw before.

So I wand'ring but erewhile
 Through the garden of this isle,
 Saw rich Beauties I confess,
 And in number, numberless.
 Yea, so differing, lovely too,
 That I had a world to do,
 Ere I could set up my rest
 Where to choose, and choose the best.

One I saw, whose hair excelled ;
 On another's brow there dwelled
 Such a majesty, it seemed
 She was best to be esteemed.

This had with her speeches won me,
 That with silence had undone me.
 On her lips the Graces hung,
 T'other charm'd me with her tongue.
 In her eyes a third did bear
 That which did anew ensnare.
 Then a fourth did fairer show,
 Yet wherein I do not know.
 Only this perceived I,
 Somewhat pleased my fantasie.
 Now, the wealth I most esteemed ;
 Honour then I better deemed.
 Next the love of Beauty seiz'd me,
 And then virtue better pleas'd me.
 Juno's love I nought esteem'd
 Whilst a Venus fairer seem'd.
 Nay, both could not me suffice,
 Whilst a Pallas was more wise.
 Though I found enough in one
 To content, if still alone.

Amaryllis I did woo,
 And I courted Phillis too.

Daphne for her love I chose;
 Chloris, for that damask rose
 In her cheek, I held as dear.
 Yea, a thousand liked, well near,
 And in love with all together,
 Feared the enjoying either;
 'Cause to be of one possest,
 Barr'd the hope of all the rest.

Thus I fondly fared, till Fate
 (Which I must confess in that
 Did a greater favour to me
 Than the world can malice do me)
 Shew'd me to that matchless Flower,
 Subject for this song of our,
 Whose perfection having eyed,
 Reason instantly espied,
 That Desire which rang'd abroad
 There would find a period.
 And no marvel if it might,
 For it there hath all delight;
 And in her hath nature placed
 What each several Fair one graced.

Nor am I alone delighted
 With those graces all united,
 Which the sense's eye doth find
 Scatter'd throughout womankind.
 But my reason finds perfections
 To inflame my soul's affections.
 Yea, such virtues she possesseth,
 As with firmest pleasures blesseth;
 And keeps sound that Beauty's state,
 Which would else grow ruiuate.

In this flower are sweets such store,
 I shall never wish for more.

Nor be tempted out to stray
For the fairest buds in May.

Let who list, for me, advance
The admired flowers of France ;
Let who will, praise and behold
The reserved marigold ;
Let the sweetbreath'd violet now,
Unto whom she pleaseth, bow ;
And the fairest lily, spread
Where she will, her golden head :
I have such a flower to wear,
That for those I do not care.

Never shall my Fancy range,
Nor once think again of change ;
Never will I, never more,
Grieve, or sigh, as heretofore ;
Nor within the lodgings lie
Of despair or jealousy.

Let the young and happy swains,
Playing on the Britain plains,
Court unblamed their shepherdesses,
And with their gold curled tresses
Toy uncensured, until I
Grudge at their prosperity.

Let all times, both present, past,
And the age that shall be last,
Vaunt the Beauties they bring forth ;
I have found in one such worth,
That, content, I neither care
What the best before me were,
Nor desire to live and see
Who shall fair hereafter be ;
For, I know the hand of nature
Will not make a fairer creature.

Which, because succeeding days
 Shall confess, and add their praise
 In approving what my tongue,
 Ere they had their being, sung ;
 Once again come lend an ear,
 And a rapture you shall hear
 (Though I taste no Thespian spring)
 Will amaze you, whilst I sing.
 I do feel new strains inspiring,
 And to such brave heights aspiring,
 That my Muse will touch a key
 Higher than you heard to-day.

I have beauties to unfold
 That deserve a pen of gold ;
 Sweets that never dream'd of were ;
 Things unknown ; and such, as ear
 Never heard a measure sound,
 Since the sun first ran his round.

When Apelles limb'd to life
 Lothed Vulcan's lovely wife,
 With such beauties he did trim
 Each sweet feature, and each limb,
 And so curiously did place
 Every well-becoming grace,
 That 'twas said, ere he could draw
 Such a piece, he naked saw
 Many women in their prime,
 And the fairest of that time ;
 From all which he parts did take,
 Which, aright disposed, make
 Perfect Beauty. So, when you
 Know what I have yet to show,
 It will seem to pass so far
 Those things which expressed are,

That you will suppose I've been
 Privileg'd, where I have seen
 All the good that's spread in parts
 Through a thousand women's hearts,
 With their fair'st conditions, lie
 Bare without hypocrisy ;
 And that I have took from thence
 Each dispersed excellence,
 To express Her who hath gained
 More than ever one obtained.

And, yet soft, (I fear) in vain
 I have boasted such a strain.
 Apprehensions ever are
 Greater than expression far ;
 And my striving to disclose
 What I know, hath made me lose
 My invention's better part :
 And my hopes exceed my art.

Speak I can, yet think I more ;
 Words compared with thoughts are poor.
 And I find, had I begun
 Such a strain, it would be done
 When we number all the sands
 Wash'd o'er perjurd Goodwin's lands.
 For, of things I should indite,
 Which I know are infinite.
 I do yield my thoughts did climb
 Far above the power of rhyme :
 And no wonder it is so,
 Since there is no art can show,
 Red in roses, white in suow ;
 Nor express how they do grow.
 Yea, since bird, beast, stone, and tree,
 That inferior creatures be,

Beauties have, which we confess
 Lines unable to express,
 They more hardly can enrol
 Those that do adorn a soul.
 But suppose my measures could
 Reach the height I thought they would
 Now relate I would not, tho'
 What did swell within me so ;
 For, if I should all descry,
 You would know as much as I :
 And those clowns the Muses hate,
 Would of things above them prate,
 Or with their profaning eyes
 Come to view those mysteries,
 Whereof, since they disesteem'd them,
 Heaven hath unworthy deem'd them.

And beside, it seems to me
 That your ears nigh tired be.
 I perceive the fire that charmeth
 And inspireth me, scarce warmeth
 Your chill hearts. Nay sure, were I
 Melted into poesy,
 I should not a measure hit
 (Though Apollo prompted it)
 Which should able be to leave
 That in you which I conceive.

You are cold, and here I may
 Waste my vital heat away,
 Ere you will be moved so much
 As to feel one perfect touch
 Of those sweets, which, yet conceal'd,
 Swell my breast to be reveal'd.

Now my words I therefore cease,
 That my mounting thoughts in peace

May alone those pleasures share
 Whereof lines unworthy are.
 And so you an end do see
 Of my Song, though long it be.



No sooner had the Shepherd Philaret
 To this description his last period set,
 But, instantly descending from a wood,
 Which on a rising ground adjoining stood,
 A troop of Satyrs, to the view of all,
 Came dancing of a new-devised brawl.
 The measures they did pace, by him were taught them,
 Who, to so rare a gentleness had brought them,
 That he had learn'd their rudeness an observing
 Of such respect unto the well-deserving,
 As they became to no man else a terror
 But such as did persist in wilful error:
 And they, the ladies made no whit afraid:
 Though since that time they some great men have scared.

Their dance, the *Whipping of Abuse* they named;
 And, though the Shepherd since that hath been blamed,
 Yet now 'tis daily seen in every town;
 And there's no country-dance that's better known,
 Nor that hath gain'd a greater commendation
 'Mongst those that love an honest recreation.

This scene presented; from a grove was heard
 A set of viols; and, there was prepared
 A country banquet, which this Shepherd made
 To entertain the ladies in the shade.

And, 'tis suppos'd his song prolonged was
 On purpose that it might be brought to pass.
 So well it was perform'd, that each one deem'd
 The banquet might the city have beseem'd.
 Yet, better was their welcome than their fare ;
 Which they perceived, and the merrier were.

One Beauty, tho', there sat amongst the rest,
 That look'd as sad as if her heart oppress'd
 With Love had been. Whom Philaret beholding
 Sit so demurely, and her arms enfolding,

Lady (quoth he) am I, or this poor cheer,
 The cause that you so melancholy are?
 For, if the object of your thoughts be higher,
 It fits nor me to know them, nor enquire.
 But if from me it cometh that offends,
 I seek the cause, that I may make amends.

Kind Swain (said she) it is nor so, nor so :
 No fault in you, nor in your cheer I know.
 Nor do I think there is a thought in me,
 That can too worthy of your knowledge be.
 Nor have I, many a day, more pleasure had,
 Than here I find, though I have scemed sad.
 My heart is sometime heavy when I smile ;
 And when I grieve, I often sing the while.
 Nor is it sadness that doth me possess,
 But, rather, musing with much seriousness
 Upon that multitude of sighs and tears,
 With those innumerable doubts and fears,
 Through which you passed, ere you could acquire
 A settled hope of gaining your desire.
 For, you dared love a nymph so great and fair,
 As might have brought a prince unto despair.
 And sure, the excellency of your passions
 Did then produce as excellent expressions.

If, therefore, me the suit may well become,
 And if to you it be not wearisome,
 In name of all these ladies I intreat,
 That one of those sad strains you would repeat
 Which you composed, when greatest discontent
 Unsought-for help to your invention lent.

Fair Nymph (said Philaret) I will do so ;
 For, though your Shepherd doth no courtship know,
 He hath humanity. And what's in me
 To do you service, may commanded be.

So, taking down a lute that near him hung,
 He gave 't his Boy, who play'd ; whilst this he sung.

Ah me !

Am I the swain,

That late from sorrow free,

Did all the cares on earth disdain ?

And still untouch'd, as at some safer games,

Play'd with the burning coals of Love, and Beauty's flames ?

Was't I could dive and sound each passion's secret depth at will ;

And, from those huge overwhelmings rise by help of reason still ?

And am I now, oh heavens! for trying this in vain,

So sunk, that I shall never rise again ?

Then let Despair set sorrow's string,

For strains that doleful'st be.

And I will sing,

Ah me !

But why,
Oh fatal Time!

Dost thou constrain that I

Should perish in my youth's sweet prime?

I, but awhile ago, you cruel Powers!

In spite of fortune crop'd contentment's sweetest flowers:
And yet, unscorned, serve a gentle Nymph, the fairest She,
That ever was beloved of man, or eyes did ever see.

Yea, one whose tender heart would rue for my distress;

Yet I, poor I, must perish nay-theless.

And, which much more augments my care,

Unmoaned I must die;

And no man e'er

Know why.

Thy leave,

My dying Song,

Yet take ere grief bereave

The breath which I enjoy too long.

Tell thou that Fair-one this, my soul prefers

Her love above my life, and that I died hers:

And let Him be for evermore to her remembrance dear,
Who loved the very thought of her whilst he remained here.

And now farewell, thou place of my unhappy birth,

Where once I breath'd the sweetest air on earth.

Since me my wonted joys forsake,

And all my trust deceive;

Of all I take

My leave.

Farewell,
 Sweet groves, to you ;
 You hills, that highest dwell,
 And all you humble vales, adieu.
 You wanton brooks and solitary rocks,
 My dear companions all, and you my tender flocks !
 Farewell my pipe, and all those pleasing Songs, whose moving strains
 Delighted once the fairest Nymphs that dance upon the plains ;
 You discontents, whose deep and over-deadly smart,
 Have, without pity, broke the truest heart ;
 Sighs, tears, and every sad annoy,
 That erst did with me dwell,
 And all other's joy,
 Farewell !

Adieu,
 Fair Shepherdesses :
 Let garlands of sad yew
 Adorn your dainty golden tresses.
 I, that loved you, and often with my quill
 Made music that delighted fountain, grove, and hill :
 I, whom you loved so, and with a sweet and chaste embrace,
 (Yea with a thousand rarer favours) would vouchsafe to grace.
 I, now must leave you all alone, of love to 'plain ;
 And never pipe, nor never sing again.
 I must for evermore be gone,
 And therefore bid I you,
 And every one,
 Adieu.

I die!

For oh, I feel

Death's horrors drawing nigh,

And all this frame of Nature reel.

My hopeless heart, despairing of relief,

Sinks underneath the heavy weight of saddest grief.

Which hath so ruthless torn, so rack'd, so tortur'd every vein;

All comfort comes too late to have it ever cured again.

My swimming head begins to dance Death's giddy round;

A shuddering chillness doth each sense confound;

Benumb'd is my cold sweating brow;

A dimness shuts my eye;

And now, oh now,

I die.



So movingly these lines He did express,

And to a tune so full of heaviness,

As if, indeed, his purpose had been past,

To live no longer than the Song did last.

Which in the Nymphs such tender passion bred,

That some of them did tears of pity shed.

This, she perceiving, who first craved the song,

Shepherd, she said, although it be no wrong

Nor grief to you, those passions to recall,
 Which heretofore you have been pain'd withall,
 But comforts rather; since they now are over,
 And you, it seemeth, an enjoying lover;
 Yet some young Nymphs among us I do see,
 Who so much moved with your passions be,
 That if my aim I taken have aright,
 Their thoughts will hardly let them sleep to night.

I dare not therefore beg of you again
 To sing another of the selfsame strain,
 For fear it breed within them more unrest
 Than women's weaknesses can well digest.
 Yet, in your measures such content you have,
 That one song more I will presume to crave.
 And if your memory preserves of those,
 Which you of your affections did compose
 Before you saw this Mistress; let us hear
 What kind of passions then within you were.

To which request he instantly obey'd;
 And this ensuing Song both sung and play'd.

SONNET II.

You gentle Nymphs that on these meadows play,
 And oft relate the loves of Shepherds young ;
 Come, sit you down, for if you please to stay,
 Now may you hear an uncouth passion sung.

A Lad there is, and I am that poor groom,
 That fall'n in love, and cannot tell with whom.

Oh do not smile at sorrow as a jest,
 With other's cares good Natures moved be ;
 And I should weep if you had my unrest.
 Then at my grief how can you merry be ?

Ah, where is tender pity now become ?
 I am in love, and cannot tell with whom.

I, that have oft the rarest features view'd,
 And Beauty in her best perfection seen :
 I that have laugh'd at them that love pursued,
 And ever free from such affections been :

Lo, now at last so cruel is my doom,
 I am in love, and cannot tell with whom.

My heart is full, nigh bursting with desire,
 Yet cannot find from whence these longings flow ;
 My breast doth burn, but she that lights the fire
 I never saw, nor can I come to know.

So great a bliss my fortune keeps me from,
 That though I dearly love, I know not whom.

Ere I had twice four Springs renewed seen,
 The force of Beauty I began to prove ;
 And ere I nine years old had fully been,
 It taught me how to frame a song of love.

And little thought I this day should have come,
 Before that I to love had found out whom.

For on my chin the mossy down you see,
 And in my veins well-heated blood doth glow ;
 Of Summers I have seen twice three times three,
 And fast my youthful time away doth go.

That much I fear I aged shall become,
 And still complain, I love I know not whom.

Oh ! why had I a heart bestow'd on me,
 To cherish dear affections so inclined ?
 Since I am so unhappy born to be,
 No object for so true a love to find.

When I am dead it will be miss'd of some ;
 Yet now I live, I love I know not whom.

I to a thousand beauteous Nymphs am known ;
 A hundred ladies' favours do I wear ;
 I with as many half in love am grown ;
 Yet none of them (I find) can be my dear.

Methinks I have a Mistress yet to come,
 Which makes me sing, I love I know not whom.

There lives no Swain doth stronger passion prove
 For her whom most he covets to possess ;
 Than doth my heart, that being full of love,
 Knows not to whom it may the same profess.
 For he that is despised hath sorrow some ;
 But he hath more, that loves, and knows not whom,

Knew I my love, as many others do,
 To some one object might my thoughts be bent;
 So they divided should not wand'ring go,
 Until the soul's united force be spent.

As he that seeks and never finds a home;
 Such is my rest, that love, and know not whom.

Those whom the frowns of jealous friends divide,
 May live to meet and descant on their woe;
 And he hath gain'd a *lady* for his bride,
 That durst not woo her *maid* awhile ago.

But oh! what end unto my hopes can come?
 That am in love, and cannot tell with whom.

Poor Colin grieves that he was late disdain'd;
 And Chloris doth for Willy's absence pine.
 Sad Thyrsis weeps for his sick Phœbe pain'd:
 But all their sorrows cannot equal mine.

A greater care, alas, on me is come;
 I am in love, and cannot tell with whom.

Narcissus-like did I affect my shade,
 Some shadow yet I had to dote upon.
 Or, did I love some image of the dead,
 Whose substance had not breathed long ago,
 I might despair, and so an end would come;
 But oh, I love! and cannot tell you whom.

Once, in a dream, me thought my love I view'd,
 But, never waking, could her face behold;
 And, doubtless, that resemblance was but shew'd,
 That more my tired heart torment it should.

For since that time more grieved I am become,
 And more in love, I cannot tell with whom.

When on my bed at night to rest I lie,
 My watchful eyes with tears bedew my cheek ;
 And then, oh would it once were day, I cry,
 Yet when it comes I am as far to seek.

For, who can tell, though all the earth he roam,
 Or when, or where, to find he knows not whom ?

Oh! if she be among the beauteous trains
 Of all you Nymphs that haunt the silver rills;
 Or, if you know her, ladies of the plains,
 Or you that have your bowers on the hills,
 Tell, if you can, who will my love become,
 Or I shall die, and never know for whom.



THE Ladies smiled oft when this they heard,
 Because the passion strange to them appear'd.
 And stranger was it, since by his expression,
 (As well as by his own unfeign'd confession)
 It seem'd true. But, having sung it out,
 And seeing, scarcely manners they it thought
 To urge him farther, thus to them he spake.
 Fair Ladies; for as much as doubt you make
 To re-command me, of mine own accord
 Another strain I freely will afford.

It shall not be of love; nor any song
 Which to the praise of Beauty doth belong.
 But that hereafter, when you hence are gone,
 Your Shepherd may be sometimes thought upon.
 To shew you also what content the field
 And lovely grove to honest minds may yield.
 That you my humble fate may not despise,
 When you return unto your braveries;
 And not suppose that in these homely bowers
 I hug my fortune, 'cause I know not yours.
 Such lines I'll sing, as were composed by me,
 When some proud courtiers, where I hap'd to be,
 Did, like themselves, of their own glories prate,
 As in contempt of my more happy state,
 And these they be. —————

SONNET.

LORDLY Gallants, tell me this,
 Though my safe content you weigh not,
 In your greatness what one bliss
 Have you gain'd, that I enjoy not?

You have honours, you have wealth,
 I have peace, and I have health;
 All the day I merry make,
 And at night no care I take.

Bound to none my fortunes be ;
 This or that man's fall I fear not :
 Him I love that loveth me ;
 For the rest a pin I care not.

You are sad when others chafe,
 And grow merry as they laugh ;
 I that hate it, and am free,
 Laugh and weep as pleaseth me.

You may boast of favours shown,
 Where your service is applied ;
 But my pleasures are mine own,
 And to no man's humours tied

You oft flatter, soothe, and fain,
 I such baseness do disdain ;
 And to none be slave I would,
 Though my fetters might be gold.

By great titles some believe
 Highest honours are attained ;

And yet kings have power to give
To their fools what these have gained.

Where they favour, there they may
All their names of honour lay;
But I look not raised to be,
Till mine own wing carry me.

Seek to raise your titles higher,
They are toys not worth my sorrow;
Those that we to day admire,
Prove the age's scorn to-morrow.

Take your honours, let me find
Virtue in a free-born mind;
This the greatest kings, that be,
Cannot give nor take from me.

Though I vainly do not vaunt
Large demesnes to feed my pleasure;
I have favours where you want,
That would buy respect with treasure
You have lands lie here and there,
But my wealth is every where;
And this addeth to my store,
Fortune cannot make me poor.

Say you purchase with your pelf
Some respect, where you importune;
Those may love me for myself,
That regard you for your fortune.

Rich, or born of high degree,
Fools as well as you may be;
But that peace in which I live,
No descent nor wealth can give.

If you boast that you may gain
 The respect of high-born Beauties;
 Know I never wooed in vain,
 Nor preferred scorned duties.

She I love hath all delight,
 Rosy red, with lily white;
 And whoe'er your Mistress be,
 Flesh and blood as good as she.

Note of me was never took,
 For my woman-like perfections;
 But so like a man I look,
 It hath gain'd me best affections.

For my love as many showers
 Have been wept as have for yours:
 And yet none doth me condemn
 For abuse, or scorning them.

Though of dainties you have store
 To delight a choicer palate;
 Yet your taste is pleased no more
 Than is mine in one poor salad.

You to please your senses feed,
 But I eat, good blood to breed.
 And am most delighted then,
 When I spend it like a man.

Though you lord it over me,
 You in vain thereof have braved;
 For, those lusts my servants be,
 Whereunto your minds are slaved.

To yourselves you wise appear;
 But, alas, deceived you are.

You do foolish me esteem,
And are that which I do seem.

When your faults I open lay,
You are moved and mad with vexing ;
But you ne'er could do or say
Ought to drive me to perplexing.
Therefore my despised power
Greater is by far than your.
And, whate'er you think of me,
In your minds you poorer be.

You are pleased, more or less,
As men well or ill report you ;
And shew discontentedness,
When the times forbear to court you.
That in which my pleasures be ;
No man can divide from me ;
And my care it adds not to,
What-so others say or do.

Be not proud, because you view
You by thousands are attended ;
For, alas ! it is not you,
But your fortune that's befriended.
Where I show of love have got,
Such a danger fear I not :
Since they nought can seek of me,
But for love beloved to be.

When your hearts have every thing,
You are pleasantly disposed ;
But I can both laugh and sing,
Though my foes have me enclosed.

Yea, when dangers me do hem,
 I delight in scorning them,
 More than you, in your renown,
 Or a king can in his crown.

You do bravely domineer,
 Whilst the sun upon you shineth.
 Yet, if any storm appear,
 Basely then your mind declineth.
 But or shine, or rain, or blow,
 I my resolutions know.
 Living, dying, thrall, or free,
 At one height my mind shall be.

When in thraldom I have lain,
 Me not worth your thought you prized ;
 But your malice was in vain,
 For your favours I despised.
 And howe'er you value me,
 I with praise shall thought on be,
 When the world esteems you not,
 And your names shall be forgot.

In these thoughts my riches are,
 Now though poor or mean you deem me ;
 I am pleased, and do not care
 How the times or you esteem me.
 For those toys, that make you gay,
 Are but playgames for a day.
 And, when Nature craves her due,
 I as brave shall be as you.

HERE Philaret did give his Song an ending,
 To which the Nymphs, so seriously attending,
 About him sat; as if they had supposed,
 He still had somewhat more to be disclosed.
 And well they knew not, whether did belong,
 Most praise unto the Shepherd or his Song.
 For, though they must confess they often hear
 Those lays which much more deeply learned are:
 Yet, when they well consider'd of the place,
 With how unlikely (in their thought) it was,
 To give them hope of hearing such a strain;
 Or that so young, and so obscure a swain,
 Should such a matchless Beauty's favour get,
 And know her worth so well to sing of it;
 They wonder'd at it. And some thus surmised,
 That he a greater man was, so disguised;
 Or else that She, whom he so much had praised,
 Some Goddess was: that those his measures raised
 Of purpose, to that rare-attained height,
 In Envy's and presuming Art's despight.

But, whilst they musing with themselves bethought
 Which way out of this Shepherd to have wrought
 What Nymph this Fair-one was, and where she lived;
 Lo, at that very instant there arrived
 Three men, that by their habits courtiers seem'd;
 For, though obscure, by some he is esteem'd
 Among the greatest, who do not contemn
 In his retired walks to visit him.
 And there they taste those pleasures of the mind,
 Which they can nor in court nor city find.
 Some news or message these new guests had brought him,
 And to make haste away (it seems) besought him.

For, instantly he rose : and that his nurture
 Might not be taxed by a rude departure,
 Himself excusing, he those Nymphs did pray,
 His noble friends might bring them on their way :
 Who, as it seems, he said, were therefore come,
 That they might wait upon them to their home.
 So, with their favour he departed thence ;
 And, as they thought, to meet her Excellence,
 Of whom he sung. Yet many deem that this
 But an *idea* of a MISTRESS is.
 Because to none he yet had deign'd the telling
 Her proper name ; nor shown her place of dwelling.

When he was gone, a lady from among
 Those Nymphs, took up his lute, and sung this song.



THE NYMPH'S SONG.

GENTLE Swain, good speed befall thee ;
 And in love still prosper thou :
 Future times shall happy call thee,
 Though thou lie neglected now.
 Virtue's lovers shall commend thee,
 And perpetual fame attend thee.

Happy are those woody mountains
 In whose shadows thou dost hide ;
 And as happy are those fountains
 By whose murmurs thou dost bide.
 For contents are here excelling,
 More than in a prince's dwelling.

These thy flocks do clothing bring thee,
 And thy food out of the fields:
 Pretty songs the birds do sing thee;
 Sweet perfumes the meadow yields:
 And what more is worth the seeing,
 Heaven and Earth thy prospect being.

None comes hither, who denies thee
 Thy contentments, (for despight)
 Neither any that envies thee,
 That wherein thou dost delight.
 But all happy things are meant thee,
 And whatever may content thee.

Thy affection Reason measures,
 And distempers none it feeds;
 Still so harmless are thy pleasures,
 That no other's grief it breeds.
 And, if night begets thee sorrow,
 Seldom stays it till the morrow.

Why do foolish men so vainly
 Seek contentment in their store?
 Since they may perceive so plainly,
 Thou art rich in being poor?
 And that they are vex'd about it,
 Whilst thou merry art without it.

Why are idle brains devising
 How high titles may be gain'd?
 Since, by those poor toys despising,
 Thou hast higher things obtain'd?
 For the man who scorns to crave them,
 Greater is than they that have them.

If all men could taste that sweetness
 Thou dost in thy meanness know ;
 Kings would be to seek, where greatness,
 And their honours to bestow :
 For, it such content would breed them,
 As they would not think they need them.

And if those who so aspiring
 To the court-preferment be,
 Knew how worthy the desiring,
 Those things are enjoy'd by thee,
 Wealth and titles would, hereafter,
 Subjects be for scorn and laughter.

He that courtly styles affected,
 Should a May-Lord's honour have.
 He that heaps of wealth collected,
 Should be counted as a slave.
 And the man with few'st things cumber'd,
 With the noblest should be number'd.

Thou their folly hast discerned,
 That neglect thy mind and thee ;
 And to slight them thou hast learned,
 Of what title e'er they be.
 That, no more with thee obtaineth,
 Than with them thy meanness gaineth.

All their riches, honours, pleasures,
 Poor unworthy trifles seem ;
 (If compared with thy treasures)
 And do merit no esteem.
 For they true contents provide thee,
 And from them can none divide thee.

Whether thrall'd, or exil'd,
 Whether poor or rich thou be;
 Whether praised, or revil'd,
 Not a rush it is to thee.

 This, nor that, thy rest doth win thee;
 But the mind which is within thee.

Then, oh why, so madly doat we
 On those things that us o'erload?
 Why no more their vainness note we,
 But still make of them a God?

 For, alas! they still deceive us,
 And in greatest need they leave us.

Therefore have the Fates provided
 Well, thou happy Swain, for thee;
 That may'st here so far divided
 From the world's distractions be.

 Thee distemper let them never,
 But in peace continue ever.

In these lonely groves enjoy thou
 That contentment here begun;
 And thy hours so pleas'd employ thou,
 Till the latest glass be run.

 From a fortune so assured,
 By no temptings be allured.

Much good do't them with their glories,
 Who in courts of princes dwell:
 We have read in antique stories,
 How some rose, and how they fell.

 And 'tis worthy well the heeding,
 There's like end where's like proceeding.

Be thou still in thy affection
 To thy noble Mistress true ;
 Let her never-match'd perfection
 Be the same unto thy view.
 And let never other beauty
 Make thee fail in love or duty.

For if thou shalt not estranged
 From thy course professed be ;
 But remain for aye unchanged,
 Nothing shall have power on thee.
 Those that slight thee now, shall love thee,
 And in spite of spite approve thee.

So those Virtues now neglected,
 To be more esteem'd will come :
 Yea, those toys so much affected,
 Many shall be wooed from.
 And the golden age deplored,
 Shall by some be thought restored.



THUS sang the Nymph; so rarely-well inspired,
 That all the hearers her brave strains admired.
 And, as I heard, by some that there attended,
 When this her Song was finish'd, all was ended.

A POSTSCRIPT.

If any carp, for that my younger times
Brought forth such idle fruit as these slight rhymes,
It is no matter; so they do not swear
That they so ill employed never were.
Whilst their desires (perhaps) they looselier spent,
I gave my heats of youth this better vent.
And, oft by writing thus, the blood have tamed;
Which some with reading wanton lays enflamed.

Nor care I, though their censure some have past,
Because my Songs exceed the fidler's last.
For do they think that I will make my measures
The longer, or the shorter, for their pleasures?
Or maim, or curtailize my free invention;
Because fools weary are of their attention.
No; let them know, who do their length contemn,
I make to please myself, and not for them.

THE END.

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